

THE

# National AND ENGLISH Review

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No. 912

## EGYPT REVISITED

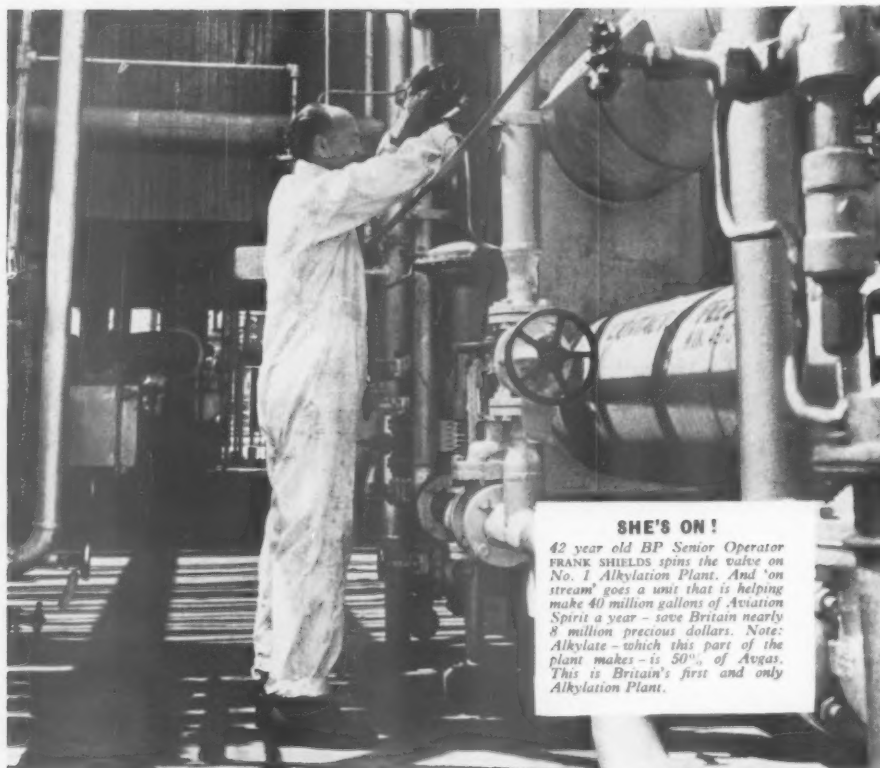
By Nadine Gordimer

TWO SHILLINGS



PHARAOHS





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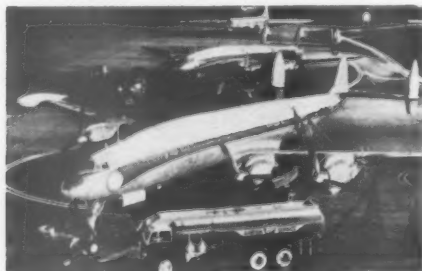
Before BP built this unit much of Britain's Avgas had to be bought from across the Atlantic - with dollars. And the demand for Avgas is ever rising.

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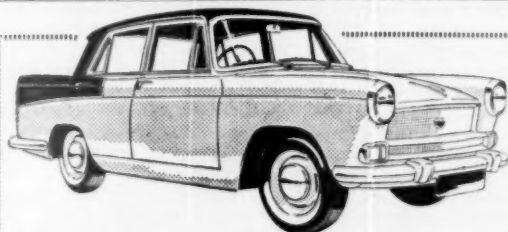
# THE NATIONAL AND ENGLISH REVIEW

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# "Why no strikes in Steel?"

asks Margaret Stewart – and comes up with this astonishing answer

MARGARET STEWART has been industrial correspondent of the *News Chronicle* since 1949, and before that was on the staff of *The Economist*. She is the first and only woman industrial correspondent of a national newspaper. She has also broadcast on current affairs for the BBC.

Miss Stewart was educated at St. Leonards School, St. Andrews, and Newnham College, Cambridge, where she read Modern Languages and Economics.

Before entering journalism she was a research worker for the Nuffield Social Reconstruction Survey and prepared evidence for the Beveridge report on social insurance.

She has made a special study of industrial relations and trade union problems. So her remarks on Steel carry a good deal of weight, because she knows so much about the way other industries are faring.

**I**N MANY YEARS OF industrial reporting, I have yet to come across an industry where there is such a "will to peace" as in Steel.

In 1957, more working days were lost through industrial disputes in Britain than in any year since 1926 – the year of the General Strike.

The Steel Industry can plead "Not Guilty". Industrial strife has passed it by, and it has not had a major strike, apart from the General Strike in 1926, for more than half a century.

Last year, there were serious stoppages in road and air transport, and in the docks. This year? Many TUC leaders have voiced the fear that there will be more strikes, because of the Government's decision to scrap compulsory arbitration.

## ROUND A TABLE

But such fears are irrelevant to an industry where arbitration by outsiders is the last resort and not an integral part of industrial relations.

This does not mean that there are never any disputes in Steel. It means that both sides prefer to settle their differences round a table. They use their own well-

tried conciliation machinery to the full.

This machinery is so good that when Steel was nationalised in 1949, nobody wanted to change it. *This is how it works:*

At the top are national agreements for each section of the industry. These fix minimum wages and such matters as hours, holidays and the cost of living sliding scale. Heavy steel usually sets the pattern, but agreements vary to suit each section.

## MEN ON THE SPOT

At the bottom are plant-by-plant negotiations – undoubtedly the key to success. The men on the spot who work on the job, and know the local conditions, fix the rates for a particular machine, mill or furnace.

If a dispute cannot be settled locally, it goes to a neutral committee of four – two management and two union men, drawn from firms not concerned in the dispute but thoroughly understanding the job.

These neutral committees nearly always reach agreement. If not, the top officials on either side take a hand and see if they can suggest a solution. If they fail, then – and only then – the dispute will go to arbitration. One side never forces the other

to arbitrate. It is done on jointly agreed terms of reference, and on the understanding the award will be accepted.

## SQUARE DEALING

Many other industries have just as good machinery on paper, but it has not prevented strikes and unhappy labour relations.

Steel has a tradition of fair and square dealing. "We talk the same language and we trust each other," was how one big Steel executive described his relations with his men.

The unions, on their side, have for the past 90 years followed the maxim of one of their early pioneers: "Reason, not force, is the weapon men should use." Union leaders, at every level, exercise an effective discipline over their members, and insist, to the point of expulsion if need be, on the honouring of agreements.

Both sides can be tough. That is not surprising in an industry where the job is tough, the hours are tough, with round-the-clock working, and the product itself is tough. But both sides are conscious of the serious effects any loss of production would have in a highly capitalised industry, where each worker is backed by up to £10,000 worth of equipment.

In my view, the short answer to the question: "Why are there no strikes in Steel?" would be: "Men of Steel are Men of Sense."

*This personal report was invited by the British Iron and Steel Federation, which believes that everyone in Britain should know the facts about steel and about the men who make it.*

## CONTRIBUTORS TO THIS NUMBER

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**NADINE GORDIMER:** South African novelist. Author of *The Soft Voice of the Serpent*, *The Lying Days*, *A World of Strangers*, and *Six Feet of the Country*. Recently revisited Egypt, after five years, on her way back to South Africa from England.

**CATHERINE HOSKYNs:** Read English at St. Hilda's, Oxford. After eighteen months in Kenya, where she worked on the staff of the *Colonial Times*, and a short period in South Africa, she recently visited West Africa.

**DENYS SMITH:** Correspondent of the *Daily Telegraph* in Washington.

**LORD ALTRINCHAM:** Editor, *The National and English Review*.

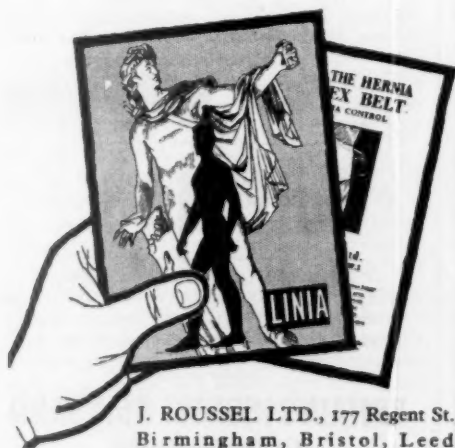
**M. G. IONIDES:** Member of Iraq Development Board, 1955—1958. Associated with development in the Middle East for many years. Concerned with industrial affairs in England 1946-55, serving for a time as Deputy Director of the Society of British Aircraft Constructors. Author of *The Regime of the Rivers Euphrates and Tigris* and *The Watering Sources of Transjordan and their Development*.

**ERIC GILLET:** Literary Editor, *The National and English Review*.

**RUBY MILLAR:** Journalist and publisher's editor for many years.

**ALEC ROBERTSON:** Writer, critic and broadcaster. Author of books on Dvořák, Sacred Music, Plainchant, etc.

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## *Episodes of the Month*

### LUNIK

**W**HAT really matters about the first escape of a man-made vehicle from the bonds of the Earth's gravity is not so much its accomplishment—that had been expected monthly since last August—as the nature of the Soviet vehicle itself. The artificial planet now in orbit about the Sun, after making a glancing shot at the Moon of unexpected accuracy, is heavy enough to have contained a man.

It is perfectly clear that the Soviet Academicians decided some years ago that their primary objective in Space should be to send men to the Moon and from there to the planets. While the Americans have been developing "minimum" space vehicles with beautifully made light-weight instruments, and rockets to propel them which have no reserve of power, the Soviet engineers have used mammoth rockets to launch ungainly satellites and lunar probes no better equipped for the scientific study of Outer Space than the far smaller American vehicles.

The Soviet plans will be far from easy to carry to fulfilment. Already we think that space rockets are expensive; by the time someone has fitted out the first vehicle capable of landing men on Mars, say, and bringing them home again, the exploration of Space may well be costing the human race some thousands of millions of pounds a year, unless some major advance in rocket technique supervenes which cannot be foreseen with real confidence today.

The rewards will be slight. None of the planets appears to be suitable for colonization, and interplanetary trade, even in the rarest metals, would be grossly uneconomic.

Even the prestige of sending heroes into Space will be diminished if the Great Powers are seen to be squandering the world's wealth in the process. Of course, there are tremendous advantages in store for the progress of astronomy and possibly biology, but for these purposes the scientists would want to dispatch instruments, not mortal men. The one really important aspect of Space travel is somewhat remote—that of journeying through Space and Time to other stars, to see if they have temperate planets like our Earth.

There exists a new international scientific body known as COSPAR (Committee for Space Research) which is supposed to stimulate co-operation between nations in Space exploration. The Americans and the Russians have both made half-hearted offers to participate with others in joint experiments. If Britain and other countries were to work wholeheartedly for international launchings, instead of cherishing hopes of entering the Space race themselves, Man might enter Space far more soberly—and far more cheaply.

#### What Price Peace?

**M**IKOYAN'S visit to the United States was well timed to coincide with Russia's latest triumph in the technological—and prestige—war. It was also conducted, on his side, with great skill and an appearance of candour perfectly calculated to beguile the Americans. The danger in the West is that public opinion will oscillate between thoughtless intransigence, induced by the propaganda of governments, and equally

thoughtless sentimentality, when the exaggerations of that propaganda are exposed. The stark truth remains that peace—i.e., in practice, multilateral disarmament with effective inspection—will not be obtained by longing for it, or by treating enemies as though they were friends: it will only be obtained at a price. This has always been true, even when the West had a clear superiority in super-weapons: now that it has lost that clear superiority the only difference is that the price will be higher. Thus the West has already conceded a point in the disarmament negotiations (that nuclear and general disarmament should be dealt with separately) against which in the past it had shown an immovable prejudice.

In the sphere of politics it should by now be obvious that the Western line on Germany is untenable. There is no hope that the Russians will ever be forced to agree (and they would naturally only agree under compulsion) to the reunification of Germany on what we would call a democratic basis. It is also quite on the cards that Dr. Adenauer does not himself desire reunification, which might seriously affect the political power of the Christian Democrats; but of course he must continue to demand it, and to insist upon his Allies' adherence to the principle.

Should they allow themselves to be so handicapped and hamstrung? Should those who won the war against Germany now permit Germany to dictate the peace—or rather, to dictate an indefinite continuance of the Cold War? We have said before, and we say again with a new urgency, that the West should recognize the Government of Eastern Germany, if by so doing it could secure Russian agreement to a genuine measure of disarmament.

## NEXT MONTH

An analysis of Press and Public reactions to Lord Altrincham's speech on January 14th to the Commonwealth Correspondents' Association.

\* \* \*

Dossier No. 11 : Lord Mountbatten

## Bournemouth and Belfast

As we go to press the long-drawn-out struggle in the Bournemouth East and Christchurch Conservative Association is still unresolved. Major Friend, the candidate whom the caucus adopted when the sitting Member, Mr. Nigel Nicolson, was precipitately disowned at the time of Suez, has had to resign, on account of his apparent links with the League of Empire Loyalists; and to complicate matters still further, Mr. Randolph Churchill has entered the field.

It is hard to believe that even a caucus so singularly foolish as the Bournemouth East one has proved itself to be would have any truck with Mr. Churchill. In any case it is vital that Mr. Nicolson be readopted, not only for personal reasons, but also and above all for reasons of principle. In our issue of February, 1957, Sir Edward Boyle discussed the question of party discipline (Lord Attlee contributing a parallel article, from the point of view of the "bosses"). Sir Edward argued, as we think convincingly, that an M.P. should, within strict and specific limits, be free to speak and vote in Parliament according to his conscience. "I think", he said, "one is entitled to take this [independent] action provided, first, that the issue is of sufficient importance and, secondly, that one's reasons for so acting do not run counter to the policy which one has previously put before the electors". In other words, under our modern democratic Parliamentary system, an M.P. must vote in Parliament for policies which he has himself commended to the electors, and which have therefore presumably helped to win him the electors' confidence, or, if he decides that he cannot after all support such policies, he must immediately resign and face the test of a bye-election. But if, on some issue of major importance, which is not covered by the electoral mandate—or on which, in his view, the electoral mandate justifies his own, rather than his leaders', attitude—he decides to vote against the Front Bench, he should be free to do so, and his constituents should, as they value our Parliamentary institutions, respect his freedom. Thus Mr. Nicolson's line on Suez should not have led his local caucus to reject him, even if that line had been mistaken: now that it has been decisively vindicated—not least by Mr. Churchill's articles in the *Daily Express*—the caucus should either readopt him, with apologies for the way he has been treated, or resign as a



## EPISODES OF THE MONTH

body and invite the Association to elect new officers and new representatives.

Against this sombre background, it is pleasant to record that in the constituency of North Belfast the sitting Unionist Member, Mr. H. Montgomery Hyde (whose article on Prison Reform appeared in our last issue) has been readopted as candidate for the next Election, by what was admittedly a close vote. Mr. Hyde's views on a number of matters, including Suez, have been no less distasteful to some of his supporters than Mr. Nicolson's to the Bournemouth East caucus; yet Mr. Hyde's candidature has been upheld—a striking victory for the rights and dignity of Parliament over local ignorance and parochialism. Edmund Burke would be proud of the good sense which has been shown by his fellow-Irishmen!

Clearly it is high time that the Tory Party were made more democratic at the constituency level. At present far too many Associations are still run in a more or less feudal spirit, by a handful of strongly entrenched officers (very often, in fact, retired officers in the military sense, with a view of political discipline, and an outlook on the world, derived from their Service days), who are re-elected year after year at a somnolent and probably quite unrepresentative Annual General Meeting. For this must be substituted an annual Party Conference, at the local as at the national level,

which every member of the local Association would be encouraged to attend. A dance, a good outside speaker, and the prospect of lively debates would provide the necessary incentives, and this Conference should elect officers for the Association, delegates to the national Party Conference and — most important—should have the last word in the selection of a new candidate or the readoption of a sitting Member. Only thus will the Tory Party lose the undemocratic atmosphere which still enables the Labour Party, though less democratic in *structure*, to appear more democratic in effect.

### Prince Philip in India

ONLY a sceptic could have doubted that the Indians, who had cheerfully welcomed even a shop-soiled British politician like Mr. Macmillan, would give a most enthusiastic reception to Prince Philip. In his own right, as husband of the Head of the Commonwealth, and as nephew of Lord Mountbatten, he was sure to be greeted with exceptional warmth. It is to be hoped that before very long the Indians will be given the chance to show their goodwill towards the Head of the new Commonwealth which owes so much to the initiative of their leaders; and that she, in turn, will have the advantage of knowing at first hand the largest, and in some ways the greatest, of Commonwealth nations.

## EGYPT REVISITED

By NADINE GORDIMER

THE friend who had come to meet me at the airport said with satisfaction, "It's worse than ever here, it's lovely." He was a foreigner, expressing in seven words a viewpoint doubly foreign: no citizen of the United Arab Republic would admit that graft is thriving in Egypt more rankly than ever, and no other member of the remnant of the foreign community whom I met would agree that life there is lovely. Yet the eccentric viewpoint given by my friend, who has spent the whole middle thirty years of his life in Egypt, is

less than half a joke. Perhaps you have to come, as I do, from Africa and not from Europe, to pick the truth from the laugh. All over the Afro-Asian world there must be isolated Europeans who secretly rejoice in the bitterness of their own banishment, because they love the life and temperament of the country of their adoption so much and so tolerantly that they luxuriate even in the intensification of national failings that so often seems to follow on independence of foreign domination.

I was last in Cairo nearly five years ago,

## NATIONAL AND ENGLISH REVIEW

in March, 1954, during the week when Nasser deposed Neguib. There were machine guns snouting at you through the dusty leaves of the shrubs in the Ezbekieh Gardens, then, and military trucks delivered their loads of soldiers at the street corners every morning, where they sipped tea on the alert, all day. Now the impromptu, trigger-happy atmosphere has gone. Suez hangs in the air, a confidence that inflates even the meanest street-urchin chest. Nasser has had the good sense and the imagination to do one or two things that show: a beautiful corniche has swept away the jumble of little villas that used to obscure the town bank of the Nile, there are new bridges, and new wide roads, and white blocks of newly-built workers' flats that, spaced on their cleared ground, look as much like institutions as all workers' flats seem to everywhere in the world. One of the new roads, which leads up to the Mokattam hills, cuts a wide tarred swathe through the Dead City, and in another part of the city the great dunes of rubble that are ancient Cairo, crumbled to dust, are being bitten into and smoothed to a new level for the dwelling places of the latest wave of civilization. (Watching the cranes and bulldozers, you can see an archaeological discovery of the future in the actual making.) All this, along with the colossus that has been raised from the sands of Memphis and put up outside the main railway station, and the boyishly-grinning pictures of Nasser that cover the faded squares where once Farouk's picture hung on the walls of shops, is the maquillage on an old face that has known so many. But it's an impressive job, and one which encourages one to believe that there's been some bone-surgery too, some improvement of the structure beneath the paint.

I soon discovered that there are two almost completely different versions of the range and effect of this surgery, and that while I should have full opportunity to hear one, I should have to gather the other, and most important, one chiefly by sharpening my own eyes and ears and the shiver of receptivity on my skin. As a European visitor without any Arabic, I naturally found myself socially stranded among the remnants of the European "foreign" community; I could not expect to cross the very few old and personal bridges between European society and Egyptian society that have survived, successfully, the Palestine War, the Officers' Revolution and Suez, and

I could not expect, without a word of their language, to reach a confession of the hopes, fears and prides of the people of the streets. While I was in Cairo I did not let myself forget that the voice in my ear—a measured, intelligent, resigned and mostly unembittered voice—was not the voice of the people; that coarse and muffled note I should have to pick up for myself.

Cairo as seen by the few members of the old European community who still manage to live there is a depressing place; an intimate whose sight is going and from whose mind the mobility of memory is fading. This is not entirely blimpish nostalgia for good old days. The ancient city that only a few years ago was one of the elegant centres of the modern world, has forgotten its sophistication. Lack of foreign currency has emptied the Kasr-el-Nil shops of nearly everything imported; they are filled with decent cloth of uninspired design made in Egyptian textile mills, and unbeautiful shoes fairly well made by Egyptian factories. Even Groppi's famous delicatessen exposition has shrunk; there are one or two delicacies you cannot buy there, now. In those smart restaurants which are still open, the head chef has gone (banished to that "home" in France from which he came perhaps two generations ago?) and the second-in-command is following the recipes, but not the flair. The great artists and musicians of the world no longer come to Egypt, and there are few who come to hear them if they do. The only evidence I saw of the cultural life of the year in Cairo was the peeling remains of tremendous posters advertizing a Soviet ballet and theatre company (a third-rate one, I was told) that had come and gone. The *luxe* of Europe has been banished, but what is left, of course, is the pandemic inania of Hollywood. The entertainment life of Cairo has become that of a complex of villages, each with its ten-foot-high paper face of Marilyn Monroe.

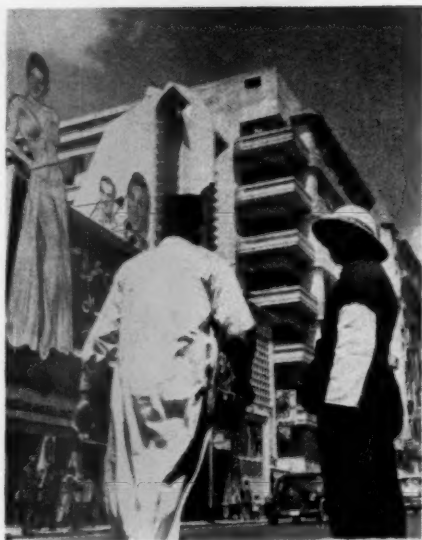
In the eloquent silence of a departed presence that Europe has left behind in Cairo—a silence that you are aware of beneath the unchanged racket and tinkle of the streets—a sound forms. The hoarse scraping of the palms of deserted gardens in Maadi is the nervous clearing of the throat; the faint stir of air in the peacock's tail of fallen leaves before the door of the British Embassy is the taking of a preparatory breath—and there, it is out. "Sequestered". Sibilant and fateful, this is the last word on

## EGYPT REVISITED

the destiny of nearly every European you meet and every second shop or bank you pass. It is the excuse, the explanation and the apotheosis of city life.

With the immediate past of the city under sequestration, the present seems to be passing into the hands of the army officers and their wives. These are the new elite; the officers' wives are the women who spend hours and money at the beauty parlours, now, and (it is said with a touch of malice) picnic on the Gezira Club golf course because they haven't yet got so far as learning the game itself. There is a splendid new officers' club, too, where the officers take the ease of top men. No doubt these are the people for whom the new suburb, dubbed Mokattam City, is intended. The development has the authentic, sad, *nouveau riche* stamp; bold, cocky, unsure in taste but sure of right—in this case the right to plan ugly villas on the moon-landscape of the Mokattam hills. This certainly is one of the most beautiful places in the world to live, if you feel you could stand the unearthliness of it. Withdrawn from the softening presence of the Nile, these austere heights have no geological memory of green or root or growth; as some mountains are above the tree belt, so these are, so to speak, above the life belt. They drop sheerly from level to level, the higher ones carved into deep escarpments of rock and sand, and the lower ones pitted and cragged by the quarrying that has built Cairo for years. From the foot you see a landslide of hardened Demerara sugar, sliced here, scooped out there, gouged and layered. From the top, with the strange, coarse crumbs of a substance that does not seem to be the surface of the earth, underfoot, you look, far below, on the peace of the Dead City, a place from which at this height only the sound-track seems missing; and beyond it to the whole marvellous city, from the medieval minarets and domes to the cubist shapes of light and shade made by modern blocks; and, at last, to the desert itself. I went into a Fatimid tomb that has stood alone, up there, through the centuries; and I had lunch at the new casino, a vast grand-piano of a building whose "free lines" have begun to peel before it is quite completed.

On another day I drove past deserted Mena House—open, I believe, but listless—and went to eat *tahina* and *kebab* at another new restaurant, this time at the foot, or rather under the nose, of the Sphinx. This



Camera Press  
SOLOMAN PASHA STREET IN CAIRO

one is called "Sahara City" and it is run by a Sudanese who looks like Uncle Tom and as a small boy was a page at the court of Franz Joseph of Austria. Both the casino restaurant and "Sahara City" were empty; "Nobody goes anywhere", said my friends. But that night, at a restaurant I had remembered from my last visit, the tables were full and people stood ten deep round the bar—avaricious-looking women, men who watched everyone who came in. "Then who are these?" I asked. "The local representatives of international crooks," said my companion boredly.

The cosmopolitan city of Cairo is dead as the Dead City itself. But does it matter? Does it really count? When I sat in the train, waiting to leave for Upper Egypt, I had a sense of release from involvement with a prevalent emotional atmosphere that had little or nothing to do with me; my emphatic identification with the dispossessed foreign community left me, and I very properly took up my own role again, which was that of a stranger in a strange land. The train took a long time to get started; a boy with rings of sesame-studded bread braceleting his arms from armpit to wrist ran up and down the platform; trolleys full of fowls in cane cages were wheeled past; the crowd, predominantly male, as usual, took an elaborate farewell of the passengers. I had plenty of time to think,



Radio Times Hulton Picture Library

"THERE IS NO EXISTENCE OUTSIDE THE BENEFICENCE OF THE

and look. The scene on the platform was just as it would have been, five years ago. The streets of Cairo, too, with the exception of the "foreign" streets, were just as before. At sunset that afternoon, I had stood on the balcony of the flat where I was staying, and had watched the people below, never ant-like as in big cities of the West, but leisured, in full cry, pushing carts, selling peanuts and roasted maize cobs, balancing coffee cups, zigzagging the hazard across hooting cars and the little red petrol tanks (from which householders buy the spirit for their stoves) drawn by jingling, brass-cluttered donkeys. As I had come out of the building to make for the station, I had passed the caretaker, sitting resting his back against the blast-wall that was put up during the War and has never been taken down; he was eating his bean soup supper preparatory to his night's work, which consists of climbing into the bed that is pushed in the foyer every evening, and falling asleep under his yellow coverlet.

Here, among the real population, the people themselves, not enough seemed to have changed. Nasser's infant industrial plans are not yet sufficiently under way to thin out the ranks of the thousands who exist on half-jobs, waiting for a share of a

half-job, or simply waiting for the opportunity to turn some absurd and unwelcome service into a job—the urban manifestation of an over-populated country that is increasing its count of souls by the disastrous number of a million every two years. And while the military caste is raising its standard of living hand over fist along with its social position, the civil servants are struggling to keep up decent appearances on salary scales that would have been adequate before the last World War. Many people told me that these totally unrealistic salaries were largely responsible for corruption; families could not hope to make ends meet without the "little extra" brought in by bribes.

Yet though these facts were disappointing, they were at least negative—by and large, they had not been brought about by the new regime; the new regime had failed, as yet, to change them.

One of the things I had liked about Cairo, five years after the revolution, I decided, was what I cautiously call national confidence—something that I don't believe has anything to do with the braggart "Voice of Cairo" or Pan-Arabism, or, indeed, anything more ambitious or aggressive than an inner assurance that each man is a



RIVER, THE SCOPE OF THE MUD, THE DISCIPLINE OF THE DESERT."

*Radio Times Hulton Picture Library.*

man measured against his own people, and not a cipher found wanting against the standards of those who are born of other countries and to other opportunities. All of a piece with this was my satisfaction when I saw what good care the new government is taking to preserve many of those great hunks of the past which jut out here and there, all over Cairo—walls and city gates as well as more obvious and spectacular monuments. When I went to the Cairo Museum, that very morning of my last day in Cairo, I was not surprised to see that although the tourists were reduced to myself, two whispering Indian girls and an American couple sitting exhaustedly in a window embrasure, the museum was full of parties of Egyptian schoolboys and girls; it seemed to me natural that a young and poor nation should be eager to teach its children that it is not so young or so poor, after all. But what was a horrifying surprise was the state of the museum. It was dusty and dingy as a second-hand dealer's; many exhibits had lost their labels, and those of others were almost indecipherable. Vaguely military-looking attendants lounged about, their sticky tea-glasses stowed away in dark corners. Even in the Tutankhamen rooms the jewellery is falling to pieces and

the gold is flaking off the incomparable splendour of the shrine. Such neglect of the exquisite work of human hands that has survived time almost long enough to have achieved immortality, gives you a feeling of real distress; I had hastened back into town to find someone who could explain to me why this was being allowed to happen. And then I heard about another side of national pride, a foolish, childish side, that will see its wonderful artistic heritage rot rather than let the foreigner—any foreigner—bring the expert help and knowledge that is needed to preserve it.

The train finally did go, and I woke up next morning in an Egypt that is not Cairo. For the next few days I followed the life of the Nile. Where in the world do you get a statement of the human condition as simple and complete as this? Look out of the train or car window and the entire context of the people's lives is there—the river, the mud, the green of crop and palm it nurtures, the desert. There is no existence outside the beneficence of the river, the scope of the mud, the discipline of the desert. This pure statement comes like peace, after the complexity and fragmentariness of life as we know it.





Black Star

CHILDREN IN THE PLAYGROUND OF A NEWLY-BUILT EGYPTIAN VILLAGE SCHOOL

The land looks as it has always looked—"always" is an impudent five years, for me, out of many thousands. Although the big estates have been broken up under a fairly vigorous and, most people agree, fairly successful agrarian reform, they are worked by the same people in the same way. I was struck again by the unfair picture of these people that soldiers who had been in Egypt during the War gave to their Western countries. I know that South Africans built up for me a caricature of a squinting, cringing, night-shirted Egypt—"those old Gyppos". The fact is that many of the peasants, who went on with their work in dogged dignity, as we walked past, are good-looking, while the youths, especially the Nubians round Aswan, are as beautiful as the lovely faces in tomb carvings. This is extraordinary when you remind yourself that these people have been underfed and debilitated by bilharzia and malaria for many generations, and that ever since year-round irrigation was achieved, they have been over-worked as well.

Strung along the Nile, their villages appear as single units—no straggler houses, and a shelter of palms drawn in around them, fortified against the sun. In the distance they seem to be those very oases that appear in the deserts of fairy tales. The beauty of this poverty has to be shaken

off. Then you see that these people are breath-takingly poor, even by the standards of African poverty that I know in South Africa. How, you ask yourself, mentally groping down to confine comparisons only to those things which seem reasonably essential to life—how can they live, so possessionless, so stripped? Apart from a more equitable distribution of land—no-one is allowed to own more than 300 feddans (315 acres) and fifty feddans for each of his first two children, and the vast absentee-owned estates have been distributed among the landless—the regime has brought one obvious enrichment to village life. Nearly every village now has a fine modern school, just outside its confines, and it was good, in the mornings, to see the children running out of the dark, close mud walls across to the spanking new white buildings with big windows. Oddly enough, contemporary architecture does not look out of place beside mud brick and tea-cup domes; I wondered about this until I remembered the model of an ancient Egyptian villa that I had seen in a dusty case in the Cairo Museum—it made use of the same juxtaposition of simple rectangles as one sees in contemporary buildings.

At last, I stood at Aswan on the barrage and felt the power of the Nile water thudding up through the concrete under my hands as it forced through the sluices. "Aswan" has become a place-name of immense overtones to anyone who reads a newspaper; since 1956 its pronouncement has stirred feelings—loyalties, resentments, fears, satisfactions, guilts—rather than conjured up the imaginative picture of a town. It was quite a surprise—it was as if I had forgotten—to find that Aswan was a place where people lived; a lively Arab town, a view of the Nile flowing in great hanks of calm water round islands of granite behind which the feluccas appeared and disappeared in scythes of white. A few miles from the town, standing on the barrage itself, it is difficult not to indulge in the dramatic feeling that you have all the life of Egypt piled up there behind you in the great dam, and in the still greater dam whose plan lies, banded about in the abstractions of international politics and finance, but marked out clearly on the landscape, not many miles behind it. I walked along the barrage to the hydro-electric power station which is under construction, cutting into the west shore. The clumsy steel giants of Europe were busy there; great



turbines and cables and cranes from Switzerland, Germany and Austria. A workman waved me back; and laughed like a boy with a firecracker when I jumped at the hollow boom of an explosion. We leaned together over the steel rail and watched the granite dust settle, far down in the immense rock basin that has been blasted out.

I am not a watcher at the peep-holes so considerably provided by builders when they are at work; the sight of men swarming about their jobs on some project that will swallow the work of their hands anonymously in its immensity is more likely to depress than thrill me. But I found myself watching the Egyptian workmen labouring below on their power station, and I felt I could go on watching for a long time. There was something hopeful and even exciting about the sight of these men with their energies caught up by the de-

mands of a huge imaginative task—not the labour of the cotton and the bean field whose fruits are used up, each day by the day's existence, and nothing more to show for it. When the power station is completed, it will be theirs to use; it does not merely feed them now, but will change their lives. Surely these people need so badly not merely to be fed better and to live better, but also, after so many centuries of humbleness, to achieve, as other people do? I hope that Nasser will not forget them in dreams of world power, as all their rulers in the past have forgotten them or sold them out, for one reason or another. People who "know Egypt" and deplore the Nasser regime tell me that "kings and governments come and go, but it makes no difference to the fellah". How tragic is the smug comfort of this remark if, this time again, it should prove to be true.

NADINE GORDIMER.

## Dossier No. 10

# VIJAYA LAKSHMI PANDIT

ONE enters a large drawing room in Kensington Palace Gardens, where are gathered notabilities who might elsewhere, in similar circumstances, be pompous and sticky. Here they are relaxed, they get on well together and lose much of their self-importance. The occasion, though it has its own essential dignity, has also the intimacy and simplicity of a family party. The hostess is the High Commissioner for India, Nehru's sister—Mrs. Pandit.

She is small, *soignée*, subtle. Unlike most people in public life—especially political women—she has never lost the art of living as a private individual. Her first words are more likely to be about her cook than about the hydrogen bomb. She observes, and relishes, the details of human nature: she is quite a gossip—though she never says anything that she does not intend to say. She attends herself to much, of a personal kind, that others would leave to secretaries. Yet she does not lose sight of the big objectives. In the best sense, she is a thoroughly serious woman. When she was younger she spent in all nearly three years in prison as a campaigner for Indian independence, and since that goal was

reached she has served her country as head of its three most important missions overseas, and the world as President of the U.N. General Assembly.

\* \* \*

She was born in 1900, ten years after her celebrated brother. Their father, Motilal Nehru, was a splendiferous and very able Brahmin who, admiring the English, gave his children a mainly English education. Vijaya Lakshmi was taught by an English governess, Miss Hooper. Though he cared little for the religious side of Hinduism, Motilal prevented his daughter from marrying a Muslim, but in 1921, she married a young lawyer, Ranjit Pandit, "a man of unusual versatility . . . a Sanskrit scholar, an accomplished linguist speaking several European and Indian languages, passionately fond of both Eastern and Western music, and gifted with a taste and talent for art". Of their three daughters one, Nayantara Sahgal, has already distinguished herself as a writer: her autobiography, *Prison and Chocolate Cake* (Gollancz), describes the family life of the Nehrus and the political movement in which her mother played a leading part. Ranjit was a key figure, in



MRS. PANDIT AT HER DESK AT INDIA HOUSE, LONDON.

Keystone

that he could share the Nehru's Western ideas and habits, yet could also recall them to an interest in, and understanding of, their homeland, its history and traditions. As a close friend of Jawaharlal he may have partly inspired *The Discovery of India*, in which the future Prime Minister set his own life and struggle in the vast perspective of Indian history.

The Nehrus had become involved in the struggle before the Pandits were married. In 1919 the Indian nation, already restless through the failure of Britain to concede self-government in return for India's war services, was outraged by the news of General Dyer's act of vandalism at Amritsar. A company of soldiers opened fire on a crowd assembled in a walled garden and did not stop firing until their ammunition was exhausted. A conservative estimate of the casualties was 379 dead and 1,208 wounded. General Dyer was condemned by the British authorities in Delhi and in London, but the *Morning Post* raised £50,000 to compensate him when he was dismissed. The ultimate blame lies with the Government which did not realize that the

time had come to give independence to India or that India had, in Gandhi, a leader to whom an independent India could safely look for guidance. The effect of Amritsar was to precipitate a long-drawn-out conflict in which, despite all that the Mahatma could do, communal passions were aroused; so that when independence eventually came, it came to the accompaniment of violence on a colossal scale. More people were killed in India at the time of Partition than in the Second World War in the West.

The Anglicized Motilal Nehru was so shocked by Amritsar that he threw in his lot with Gandhi, who already commanded the allegiance of his son. The alliance between the aristocratic Nehrus and the arch-champion of the under-dog was decisive. For all the grotesqueness and inhumanity of its caste system, India was able at the critical moment to produce from its intellectual and social elite men—and women—who would identify themselves with the people in the fight for national freedom and dignity. (It is worthy of remark, in passing, that the controversial Mr. Jinnah left the Congress Party not on

the religious issue, but because he disliked its socially radical trend.)

Mrs. Pandit did three stretches in prison—for eleven, fifteen and six months respectively. For her it was more of a penance than for her brother, because she has always been fond of her creature comforts. But she was incarcerated for a much shorter total period than he, and it did not affect the natural gregariousness of her character: with him, it intensified a congenital aloofness, a proneness to philosophic detachment and melancholy. When, in 1937, under the Hoare reforms, the Congress Party assumed executive responsibility in the Provinces, Mrs. Pandit became Minister in charge of Health and Local Government in the United Provinces. She was good at the job and tackled a cholera epidemic with efficiency. In 1939 the Congress Ministries resigned, because India was declared to be at war with Germany without reference to Indian opinion. As an emotional reaction this was understandable enough; that four hundred million people should be plunged into war with a distant European power, by the *ipse dixit* of one man—a foreigner—was profoundly insulting to their pride. ("I, Victor Alexander John, Marquess of Linlithgow", ran the announcement in the Gazette of India, on September 3rd, 1939, "Governor-General of India and *ex officio* Admiral, therein being satisfied thereof by information received by me, do hereby proclaim that war has broken out between His Majesty and Germany"). The Nehrus had a very much better anti-Nazi and anti-appeasement record than most British politicians, so their indignation was all the greater. Nevertheless it was probably a capital error on the part of Congress to resign at that time. Through its intransigence it lost control of the machinery of power, and was later (after the "Quit India" resolution) actually banned, while the Muslim League was free to build up its strength.

The war years were thus among the most frustrating in Mrs. Pandit's life. In 1944 her husband died in prison and in the same year she toured America, where she found much sympathy for her denunciations of the British *Raj*. But her political enmity never destroyed her fundamental goodwill towards England. Once the incubus of alien rule was removed she was able to return to the attachment which had existed since her childhood. Perhaps of all the

eminent Indians of her generation she is the one who is most at home in England.

Since Independence her career has kept her outside India. In 1946, 1947 and 1948 she led the Indian delegation at the U.N. From 1947 to 1949 she was Ambassador in Moscow, from 1949 to 1951 Ambassador in Washington, and since 1954 she has been High Commissioner in London. In 1953 she became President of the U.N. General Assembly. She has visited Communist China and has commented adversely upon the totalitarian nature of the regime there, while praising its material achievements. While she was at the U.N. the so-called Afro-Asian bloc was unified, effective and respected by the West: since she left, it has lost cohesion and influence.

In her present post she is more than just her country's representative in the U.K. (also in Ireland and Spain): she is recognized as her brother's deputy in Europe. Other Indian diplomats are in constant touch with her, and she has also kept on good terms with Prime Ministers. For instance, she maintained very friendly relations with Eden, though her reaction to Suez was predictably vehement. This ready access to Downing Street has made up for the fact that otherwise she, like other Com-



Keystone  
MRS. PANDIT EXCHANGES GREETINGS WITH THE  
WIFE OF THE BURMESE AMBASSADOR

monwealth High Commissioners, would have to do her business with the Commonwealth Relations Office rather than with the Foreign Office—an anomaly which is peculiar to the U.K. She had much to do with persuading Macmillan to visit India last year (Eden had refused to do this when he was planning a similar trip to the Antipodes), and she has also been deeply concerned with the Duke of Edinburgh's visit to her country. She likes the Royal Family and does not regard the Queen's office as Head of the Commonwealth, which results from India's decision to become a republic, as a legal fiction or a mere formality. But she knows how much more must yet be done if the bulk of her compatriots are to be given a chance to share her awareness.

Still under sixty, Mrs. Pandit can look forward to many more years of active life. What further triumphs and opportunities will they bring her? So long as her brother is Prime Minister she will remain a potent influence in his counsels, balancing that of Krishna Menon, for whom her feelings are not exactly tender. It is wrong, however, to depict her as the moderating influence, Menon as the firebrand, with fellow-travelling tendencies. Both are equally pledged to India's foreign policy of military non-alignment, combined with loyalty to the democratic cause. But Mrs. Pandit, though hardly less fervent in her way than Menon, has many human qualities which he lacks, and is much better fitted than he to explain India's position to critics and sceptics. Where Menon would give the impression that India was bitterly hostile to the West, Mrs. Pandit would show—what is indeed true—that the non-alignment policy has been the cause of India's political stability and resistance to Communism. If Western leaders are now more conscious of the realities in India, and of the paramount need to support India economically, without strings, Mrs. Pandit deserves much of the credit. Her diplomacy has been of the highest order.

Yet she was once an administrator, and she may now be thinking of a return to executive work. Certainly she will before long be relinquishing her present appointment, and it will be most interesting to see how she proposes to occupy herself when she gets back to India. It is thought that she may at first become Chief Minister of her home State, Uttar Pradesh (the old United Provinces), but this is likely to be only a stepping-stone to higher things. If

she were to succeed Rajendra Prasad as President of India she would bring to the great domed building in New Delhi, where once the Viceroys reigned, the grace and charm which she now displays in her mansion in Kensington. But, with her incomparable experience of world affairs, might she not be needed in the central Government? At present Nehru is his own Foreign Minister, but his successor—especially if he were Morarji Desai, who has only once been outside India—would be likely to end this duplication of work, and Mrs. Pandit is surely the best candidate for the External Affairs Ministry. And if she were to prove as successful in national as in international politics, might she not one day be in the running for the Premiership? The chance may be remote, but it cannot be ruled out.

In any event she has proved herself, on her achievements to date, an outstanding example of female emancipation. What she has done is remarkable for any woman, doubly remarkable for an Oriental woman. She has helped to win freedom for her country and equality for her sex. But there is nothing of the self-conscious woman of destiny about her as she makes her way in the world she has done her best to change.

## O WHERE YOU GO

*Islands are hardening from the sea  
Where dawn uncoils the horizon  
Making it fast for another day.  
And sailors are still, watching  
The phosphorus fade like stars.*

*And I would be with them  
Drawing the new day across my eyes:  
And afterwards to lie listening  
As the ship stirs to stewards:  
And then a tap to set your eyelids  
Trembling on wakefulness.*

*But where you go you go from me  
And I lie inland  
Hearing only the wind stirring the trees  
And birds loud about their toilet,  
And the whistle of cowmen as lowing  
Breaks plaintive all across the morning,  
As the one thought breaks across my dream*

*O where you go you go from me  
You go from me.*

JULIAN MITCHELL.

# ALL AFRICAN DIARY

BY CATHERINE HOSKYNs

*The author records her day-by-day impressions of the All African People's Conference, held in Accra, Ghana, from December 5th-12th, 1958*

**Friday:** The All African People's Conference opened today in Accra. More than three hundred delegates, representing the trade unions and political parties of twenty-eight African countries are expected. Two hundred are already here. In smart Western suits, in short sleeves, in white robes and beaded caps, carrying brief cases, fly whisks, ivory canes, they sign on at the secretariat, receive their freedom badges and settle down in the chalets, huts and boarding houses taken over for the purpose.

The *Ambassador*, Ghana's luxury hotel, has become the All Africa Club; delegates gather in the lounges and out on the terrace. For some it is their first visit to a non-colour-bar country. The Ghana Farmers' Association has agreed to provide the food; lorry loads of chickens arrive at half-hourly intervals.

The Conference was planned last March by the African leaders who came to Accra to celebrate Ghana Independence Day. Its aim? To explore the possibilities of African federation; to work out the strategy of what is called "the African Non-Violent Revolution"; to set up permanent machinery to co-ordinate African efforts throughout the continent. It was decided that the Conference could not be held at government level and invitations were sent out by the Ghana Convention Peoples' Party.

Already there is trouble. The United Arab Republic has sent a powerful, fifteen-man delegation, and the leader, backed up by the Algerians, has objected to the fact that the terms of reference specify non-violent revolution. This, he says, should be discussed by the Conference. At the same time the Middle East Press is stating that the Conference has really been called by the Afro-Asian Solidarity Committee. Several Africans domiciled in Cairo have come to the Conference claiming to represent their own countries. If Cairo is not to dominate strong action must be taken.

**Saturday:** Strong action has been taken. At the first meeting of the heads of delegations officials were not elected, they were "chosen" by the chairman of the Prepara-

tory Committee, Ghana's Minister of External Affairs, Kojo Botsio. The chairman of the Conference is to be Tom Mboya of Kenya. One of the secretaries is a Ghanaian, one a Nigerian. Seven out of ten of the steering committee members come from south of the Sahara. English-speaking Africa is clearly going to have the last say. (Yet a notable absentee from the Conference is Julius Nyerere, sage African nationalist leader in Tanganyika. It is being rumoured that his absence is due to disapproval of recent actions of the Ghanaian Government).

A five-point agenda has been agreed on and in the afternoons committees will meet to discuss resolutions on colonialism, racial discrimination, tribalism, the possibilities of federation and the permanent secretariat. The opening session will be on Monday and, on succeeding mornings, heads of delegations will address the conference.

At the gala dance a Tunisian girl captivates everyone and a fugitive from South Africa orders whisky with a flamboyant gesture.

**Sunday:** Over a hundred foreign journalists are now in Accra. Three large and friendly Chinamen appear in an ancient Morris and a reporter from East Berlin goes to the Director of Information and asks for a night pass. "You see," he explains carefully, "I may want to go out in the evening."

Most of the delegates have now arrived. They fall into three groups, those from countries already independent, those from countries for which independence is certain (merely a question of time and diplomacy), and those from countries still fighting settler or imperial domination. Noticeable in the first group are Mr. Fouad Galal, a squat, sculptured Egyptian with a finger-tip knowledge of African affairs and M. Slim, the Tunisian ambassador in London. These two are everywhere, smoothing, interpreting, helping.

In the second group English-speaking Africa is better represented than French. The French governments are a little embar-





Ghana Information Services

rassed. They said "Yes" to de Gaulle and cannot really rant against imperialism. Houphouet-Boigny of the Ivory Coast sees his future with France and dare not offend her. So most of the French delegates are from splinter parties which would have liked, with Guinea, to say "No". They are vocal but unrepresentative.

The third group is the largest and the most forceful. Kenya, Algeria, South Africa, Angola are out to exert pressure. "Pious resolutions," says a Kenyan, "are no good. We want concrete help." The extent of the help required varies. Algeria wants a Pan-African army, South Africa an economic blockade, Kenya a freedom fund.

Sekou Touré, the Prime Minister of Guinea, has sent his wife to represent him. She is so beautiful that she stops proceedings whenever she appears. In the afternoon she kicks off in the Ghana-Guinea football match. Ghana wins 6-1.

**Monday:** The official opening. Accra's Community Centre, a white-painted building overlooking the sea, is decorated with flags and banners. Across the entrance is written "Forward to Independence, Now" and inside "Hands Off Africa! Africa Must Be Free!"

Ghanaian crowds line the route and wave placards—"Break Your Chains", "Imperialists Go Home", "Quit Africa Now".

Nkrumah gets a huge ovation. He seems already a figure in history with his domed forehead and huge, melancholy eyes. He sits alone at the edge of the platform while the photographers crowd round. The heads of delegations rise and bow as their names are called. South Africa, U.A.R., Guinea, Algeria receive the biggest cheers. Messages are read from Khrushchev and Chou-En-Lai.

Nkrumah and Mboya both address the Conference. Though firm in their condemnation of colonialism, lyrical in their hopes for the new Africa, they are clearly anxious that nothing should be said or resolved which will offend the liberal West, the United Nations, or America. Both stress non-violence, both quote the United Nations Charter and both make oblique reference to the dangers of communism. They are cheered and stamped and the session ends.

**Tuesday:** M. Fanon, head of the Algerian delegation speaks—thin, fanatical, intelligent. Listening to him is like being beaten with a very thin cane over and over again. His voice rises to a scream. His plea is that



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each African should turn himself into an anti-colonialist soldier. "All forms of struggle," he says, "must be accepted. Violence can never be excluded. If Africa is to be free, we cannot beg, we must tear away by force."

Mboya glosses. "No one," he says, "wants violence, but it is the response from the other side, the attitude of the colonial powers which determines whether a country will use force or peaceful means."

The South African delegate comes to the rostrum. He is solid, bespectacled, down to earth. South Africans, he says, still hope to win their rights by peaceful means, but to do so they need the support of the whole of Africa. "I come here," he ends, "in the faith that when the time comes you will not fail us." These two speakers make a deep impression and delegates take a thoughtful lunch. Five observers arrive from Moscow.

*Wednesday:* The committees are now in session, and here the Nigerians are playing a dominant role. They appear to be the only people with any idea of committee work and have submitted neatly typed memoranda on every subject. That Nigeria will, intellectually as well as numerically, dominate any kind of West African Federation becomes embarrassingly obvious.

In the morning the delegate from Angola steals the show. He set off from Angola four months ago and walked over the Nigerian border in November. Since then he has been given sanctuary by the Ghana government. His speech is read in case reprisals should be taken on his family. Angolans work fourteen hours a day, seven days a week; there are only sixty-eight Africans in secondary school and so on . . . How many of the delegates have even heard of Angola?

The next speaker is Dr. Gikonyo Kiano—thin, wiry, intelligent and a member of the Kenya Legislative Council. His speech is, surprisingly, a carefully constructed, emotion-directed, appeal for the release of Jomo Kenyatta. At the appropriate moment people spring up all over the hall waving placards—"Free Jomo Now!" Mboya jumps to his feet and joins in the clapping.

In the evening it turns out that this demonstration was organized by the observers from America. This cult of Kenyatta is interesting. The Americans have always regarded him as a martyr, but why are the Kenyan leaders suddenly so concerned? Perhaps they fear the power he will have

when released and want to put him squarely in their debt.

*Thursday:* The speeches are beginning to get a little hysterical. The Russians systematically clap any reference to violence and it sometimes seems that there are more Russians in the hall than delegates. "The British say we are not ripe for independence," cries Ali Mushin from Zanzibar. "What do they think we are, a bunch of bananas?" "We don't want to lose our chains," says a man from Tanganyika, "we want them to bind up the British."

Three M.P.s arrive from the House of Commons; they drift around, suave, puzzled, polite.

*Friday:* No public session today. The secretariat is working frantically; committee reports have been presented to the heads of delegations. Rumours circulate. The Algerians have walked out on the violence issue. They have walked back. A Freedom Army is to be formed. It isn't. The Ghana Parliament ratifies the Ghana-Guinea Union.

*Saturday:* The closing session. There is only time for some of the resolutions to be read and there is doubt as to whether the Press have been given the right copies. However the main lines are clear and the general feeling is that the English-speaking group has won the day.

A permanent secretariat is to be set up in Accra. A secretary-general and three members of the steering committee are to be permanently resident in Accra, and a freedom fund is to be started. The Conference condemns all forms of imperialism and colonialism and lists those ways in which the African race is being exploited. It recommends that the Human Rights Charter of the United Nations shall be immediately applied to all African territories. The violence issue has been neatly resolved and the resolution reads:

"That this Conference declares its full support for all fighters for freedom in Africa, to all those who use peaceful means of non-violence and civil disobedience as well as to all those who are compelled to retaliate against violence to attain national independence and freedom for the people."

The concrete proposals are that the independent countries at government level, and all others at a personal level, should boycott South African goods; that an African Legion should be set up "to protect the freedom of the African peoples" (nobody seems able to define its functions any fur-

ther than this); that a human rights complaints from any African country, dependent or independent; that the ultimate aim should be a United States of Africa, and that as a first step towards this attempts should be made to federate in North and West Africa.

At the close Nkrumah speaks—a triumphant figure. He announces his intention of calling a conference of West African leaders to discuss federation. He is cheered and cheered again.

*Sunday:* The shouting is over; the hall is empty; the flags are drooping. What has been achieved? In a word, a beginning. Morale has been raised and, despite the Cairo-Accra dispute, a feeling of solidarity created. The way has been mapped out; more detailed discussion can now take place. And the world has been given a few pointers. Africa still looks West and not

East for help and is aware that she has not only to gain, but also to keep, her freedom. Nigeria has, perhaps for the first time, shown her strength and her vast potential. The splits in French West Africa are deep; the community of feeling between such widely separated countries as Kenya, South Africa, Nigeria, is strong.

South Africa has already reacted. "The West," shouts Mr. Erasmus, Minister of Defence in the Nationalist Government, "will have to choose between Africa and the Union." Tunisia has given £500 pounds to the secretariat and has offered to be host for the next conference. Several Ghanaians are buying chickens since all Ghana's eggs come from South Africa.

Delegates are returning home. Africa is on the move.

CATHERINE HOSKYNs.

## THE HYPOCHONDRIAC DOLLAR

By DENYS SMITH

AMERICANS were talking more about the health of the dollar as the new year began than at any period since the 'thirties. But they were still perhaps not talking about it enough. Other subjects, such as Mikoyan's visit, the exploration of outer space, the inter-party and intra-party manoeuvrings, were far more absorbing.

Eisenhower dwelt on the subject in his annual message on "the State of the Union". "Our nation's progress and fiscal integrity are interdependent and inseparable," he declared as he opened the battle for what will be a long-drawn-out struggle to prevent expenditures voted from running ahead of taxes received. But the compulsive force behind Eisenhower's remarks was not the pressure of a disturbed American opinion. It was the knowledge brought to his attention that foreign countries were becoming increasingly apprehensive. There is more debate about the dollar's future in commercial and financial centres abroad than there is in the United States. An impression of incorrigible American fiscal irresponsibility is spreading. The strength which the pound and other European currencies showed after external convertibility was established was an indication of those countries' increased economic strength, but in part it was a reflection of a weaker

dollar position. The greater part of the \$785,700,000 reduction in American-held gold reserves last year was due to the normal mechanisms of international trade, but some of it was due to people preferring gold to dollars. The President's chief financial advisers, the chairman of the Federal Reserve Board and the Secretary of the Treasury, came back from the New Delhi meeting of the Monetary Fund and World Bank governors with reports of growing foreign concern over the future of the dollar.

There were two main reasons for the concern of foreign delegations at the New Delhi meeting, said the Federal Reserve Board chairman, William Martin. These were the \$3,000 million deficit in the budget for the current fiscal year and the continual pressure of wage increases on prices. "There can be no question that when business is improving and moving actively towards higher levels, a budget deficit becomes fuel on the fire of inflation." Martin also found the foreign experts saying that "American goods are going to find themselves priced out of the market." This was the kind of talk which continued for about a year before the devaluation of the pound in 1949. Martin did not believe that the U.S. had reached the stage where a similar threat

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was facing the dollar; but he made it clear that unless the warning signals were heeded he feared the United States might find itself headed in that direction.

It seems highly probable that Mikoyan, who has been dealing with trade and economics all his official life, was well aware of these foreign doubts and took a great interest in America's fiscal position and the likelihood that inflation would get out of hand. This might prove the weak link in the economic armour of the West. He arrived with Lunik, the Russian artificial asteroid, circling the sun, which was calculated to improve his bargaining position in the military-diplomatic field. It was a symbol of Russian progress in long-range missiles which could devastate the United States from launching sites in Russia. But he also arrived after the series of economic moves in the West which were a symbol of the non-Communist world's economic strength. They meant that the time when Russian economic progress could "bury", or overwhelm, the West would be far distant—unless what some people were saying about the dollar proved true. If there seemed to be any chance of an American economic crisis comparable to the 1929 crash, then anything Russia could do to promote it would be well worth while.

One contribution would be to scare the United States into military expenditures which would weaken its economy and increase the size of the budget deficit with its related contribution to inflation. This in its turn would mean leaving world tensions unsettled, in anticipation that they could be settled later on terms more advantageous to Russia because of the United States' economic weakness. The Russians have occasionally said, for outside consumption, that America spent money on arms to bolster its economy and feared any disarmament proposals. But even a Russian would agree that business flourished best in times of tranquillity and was unsettled by international alarms and excursions. So the President's fight for a balanced budget and against inflation not only has more than a domestic American interest; it is of importance in the world political, as well as the world economic, field.

Congress will no doubt take a somewhat worried look during the year at America's declining gold stocks, but not too worried a one. There is still a lot of the stuff buried at Fort Knox. It is most unlikely to blame itself for contributing to the decline because

it voted expenditures not covered by taxes. No trade union official is likely to curb his demands for wage increases because they may lead to American goods being priced out of world markets, thus leading to a still further reduction in American gold reserves to make up for an unfavourable trade balance. A more likely political reaction would be to cut down on foreign aid expenditures or to question the increased American contribution proposed for the Monetary Fund. A more likely trade union reaction would be to demand more protection against imports produced by "cheap foreign labour."

Said Eisenhower: "Inflation can be prevented. But this demands statesmanship on the part of business and labour leaders and of government at all levels." One can only hope it will be forthcoming. The political leaders, mainly on the Democratic side, who criticize the President's cash register approach do not argue that inflation is good for you. Some of them say that a little inflation is stimulating and inevitable. But most of them argue that the chief economic problem the country faces is not the threat of inflation but of stunted growth. Stimulate growth by every means, including government expenditures, and inflation will take care of itself. The joke about the man who thinks he must be growing stronger as he grows older because he can now lift a ten-dollar bag of groceries while ten years ago he could not, ignores the fact, they argue, that he now works less time to get that same bag of groceries. If America could live without trade and in a closed economy, the argument would be more impressive, as would the assurances that creeping inflation would never become a dangerous galloping inflation.

But even supposing the worst, the time is a long way off when the United States would have to consider devaluation of the dollar, or increasing the price of gold from the present \$35 the ounce, which would amount to the same thing.

The free world's monetary gold is estimated at a little over £14,107 million, of which the United States still holds over half, some £7,357 million. The legal gold backing required for federal reserve notes and deposit accounts is 25%. The ratio of gold to currency now is 42.2% compared with 47.4% at the beginning of last year. The surplus gold not needed as a currency cover still amounts to around £2,930 million. The "outflow" of gold would have to continue at the current rate for several years before

anything needed to be done about it.

Devaluation of the dollar would be the very last, not the first, thing which the American authorities would consider. They are also fully aware that the slightest indication that they were even seriously examining the arguments for increasing the present gold price to check the drain on gold would lead to a flight from the dollar. The most promising prospect is that the realization will grow that the United States does not face an "either-or" choice, that there is no real conflict between growth and dollar stability, that it is not a question of swapping a little more unemployment for a little more price stability, or a little less price stability for a little more employment. Dollar stability, economic expansion, balanced budgets and adequate defence and social expenditures can all go hand in hand. Each can be promoted without harming the other.

DENYS SMITH.



**T**HE NEWS THAT THE RUSSIANS' private planet will circle the Sun "for ever" may encourage those with otherwise shaken notions of permanence. Most of us (except the Worshipful Company of Fishmongers, who have some junket which takes place "on the Eve of the Decollation of St. John, every second year for Ever") no longer dare employ the phrase. What will in fact happen to these rockets? Perhaps, thousands of years hence, descendants of ours travelling in space will pick up an unidentifiable echo on their radar screen; will close on the object cautiously; and will be amazed to see this hoary old rocket, long-funnelled and inefficient, floating in space like the sunken galleons of Jules Verne. Probably they will take it in tow and put it in the Science Museum next to Stephenson's rocket. Perhaps so much hardware will be flung up into space that, with increasing traffic, an agitation will spread for its removal. If that happens, a Khrushchevian or even a new Georgian

Group—differing in important ways from the existing body of that name—will be formed to prevent the destruction of such historic objects. Regarded as dilettanti, they will struggle, probably without success, against the perpetual tastelessness of those in power who wish to desecrate these ancient monuments. Whatever happens, then as now, "for ever" will be far too strong a phrase to use.

**F**OR ORDINARY MORTALS Estate Duty is a more immediate topic. This revolting and wasteful levy never receives the criticism it deserves. The latest desultory correspondence in the Press has only suggested better ways of collecting it, whereas it should of course be abolished entirely. I am so angry I must be tabular:

1. A tax on death is barbarous. When the head of one's family is removed by the Almighty one needs all the succour and comfort one can get. The State chooses that exact moment to remove one's way of life—the single thing from which most comfort and memory of the departed might have been derived. Death and the State hover together in the bed curtains waiting to strip the survivors. It is a curious sensation.

2. The tax on death is wasteful. I do not raise the old cry that capital should not be spent as income by the Government. That is nonsense; the proceeds of Estate Duty just go into the general Government pot—and the Government spends far more on capital goods than Estate Duty produces. The tax is wasteful because of the disturbance and expense of repeated forced sales of assets; because many of the best brains of the country are consumed in schemes for avoiding the tax—which other best brains are consumed in frustrating; because it encourages old people to spend capital; because it discourages rich people from working or saving; because it reduces the yield to the Government of Income and Surtax—either by fragmenting estates or by encouraging unnecessary charitable bequests. Estate Duty produces only £170 million a year. Subtract from that the large amount now paid in kind—land, houses, or works of art—and I doubt whether the balance anything like covers the enormous cost to the economy of all this friction and false incentive.

3. The tax on death is ineffectual. What is its purpose? Clearly not to raise



Eric de Maré

ABINGDON GAOL

revenue, or payment would not be accepted in kind. Presumably it is meant to remove financial inequalities and anomalies (whatever that may mean). But in fact it creates them. The few ways of saving an estate from this tax are well known; whether they succeed is a matter of luck—a matter of dying in the right order. Fifty years ago “the Rich” were the product of thrift; fifty years hence they will be the product of a grisly lottery. Furthermore, many solid and honourable citizens will not even partake in the lottery; they refuse to take the unnatural and distasteful steps necessary to save their estates. They vanish. Estate Duty makes the composition of “the Rich” yearly less rational and less worthy than before.

What is to be done? Abolish Estate Duty and substitute a graded Surtax on unearned income to produce the same effect. To remove 80 per cent. of a man's capital in a generation, an annual Surtax of seventy shillings in the pound should suffice. That would at least show everybody what is happening and what a farce it all is.

\* \* \*

**R**OCKETS, DEATH, AND NOW PRISONS. It must be the influence of Quatermass. As the *National Review* points out, many of our prisons are no longer engines of social reform; they are antiques. Consequently when they have been emptied, they must be preserved. The best architecture, as our best architect, Inigo Jones, observed, is “solid, masculine, and unaffected”. Prisons have thus in the past given architects a tremendous opportunity and some have seized it. Newgate Gaol by Dance was the finest of all. Built of immense rusticated blocks of stone, its small oppressive doorways carved with fetters, it was demolished—luckily after being photographed—to make way for the Old Bailey. Abingdon Gaol (1801) survives; it should be seen from the river, as in Eric de Maré's illustration. Perth prison, identifiably like the Piombi in Venice, should undoubtedly be preserved. So should the Old Naval Prison in Lewes. Buckingham has rather a jolly little prison in the middle of the street, part antique shop and part public convenience, with a tree



growing out of the roof. Somewhere there must be a prison by Vanbrugh; that would be something. Dartmoor, designed by David Alexander in 1806, and Pentonville by Major Jebb (first Surveyor General of Prisons) in 1840 are on the dreaded Panopticon plan, conceived by Jeremy Bentham, whereby all the prisoners in the radiating wings could be kept under a single central eye. I hope they will survive, empty, to give aesthetic pleasure and a smug *frisson* to a more enlightened generation.

\* \* \*

**E** DUCATION HAS PROBABLY NOTHING to do with it, but I must congratulate Mr. Robert Birley, headmaster of Eton, for his recent remarks about helping professional men to send their children to public schools. Under fire already, public schools are in fact becoming narrower, not broader, in the range of boy that goes to them. Soon only tycoons will be able to afford them, which will be fatal for both schools and young tycoons, who badly need the civilizing touch of doctors', parsons' and soldiers' sons—and of State scholars. Special scholarships for the sons of professional men are needed; could not bodies like the Pilgrim Trust endow some?

Public boarding schools must continue—if civilized people are to continue to inhabit the remoter parts of the island, for one reason; and to continue there must be more of them, with more scholarships and many more free places. Free places will never be adequately filled until the transition from State to public school is easier. The way to achieve this is to be rid of private preparatory schools and get everybody *starting* their education at a State school. Most educated parents who mean to send their sons to a public school would dearly like to start them off in a State primary school, where they are young enough to get on with each other but too young (in sensible people's estimation) to go away from home to a boarding school. But the education is so sketchy and the Common Entrance examination so specialized that this is impossible. Why is the education so sketchy? Because the children of the men in power go to private preparatory schools. If our rulers started their sons off in State primary schools, they would soon see to it that teachers were properly paid, and that it was possible to get into a public school from a State school; as a result the education

provided would improve. If all the boys at a public school had started in a primary school then State scholars would find it far easier to fit in, and everybody would benefit enormously. The way to preserve our public schools—that is to say the best feature of our educational system—and at the same time to give equality of opportunity and better primary education to all as well, is to do away with private preparatory schools. One does not want to use compulsion, especially in education. One would like to see the private preparatory schools just “wither away” (to borrow a phrase from the well known educationalist, K. Marx—who would undoubtedly approve of the plan). Perhaps we could harness that potent force, snobbery. If a few of our rulers would send their children to a State primary school, everything would flow from that small beginning, and our educational system would be slowly and marvellously transformed.

AXMINSTER.

## CORRESPONDENCE

*To the Editor, National and English Review*

### DECIMALIZATION

*From Cmdr. W. O. Rees Millington*

SIR,

Surely “Axminster” is making rather heavy weather over his “decimalization” proposals? Why not use the East African system which has worked well for many years? 100 cents to the shilling, but for U.K. usage you could cut a decimal point and have 10 pence to the shilling. Each of these would be equivalent to the present E.A. 10 cent piece. 200 pence to the pound and you could keep all the present silver coinage, just altering the sixpence to a half shilling bit of 5 pence. And do we really need a quarter shilling? Certainly we don't need halfpence and farthings any more. Half a crown would be written as 2.5 and all notes of 20/- and over would have pound denominations as well, as has always been the case with E.A. currency since the Currency Board was established.

Yours faithfully,

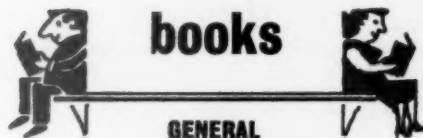
W. O. REES MILLINGTON

Millfield,

Ryde, I.W.



## THE LIGHT THAT PARTLY FAILED



### THE LIGHT THAT PARTLY FAILED

THE IMPERIAL IDEA AND ITS ENEMIES. By  
A. P. Thornton. Macmillan, 30s.

"ENGLAND", said Kaiser William II in 1901, "is shortsighted. Ultimately she will be pressed out between Russia and the United States. . . . It may be fifty years—but it will come".

In terms of material power, which was all he could understand, the prediction was correct. England was able to dominate the world only so long as her fleet controlled the seas and her industry reigned supreme. In these conditions she was not at all keen to establish colonial, or imperial, strength. In 1875 the word "imperialism" still "appeared in self-conscious quotation-marks, even in conservative newspapers and quarterlies—in this distinction keeping a proper company with the equally exotic *prestige*, another French import that took twenty years to lose its italics." But Disraeli had his own romantic vision of Empire, which towards the end of the 19th century could command the support of hard-headed businessmen. Whereas "it had been true, a generation ago, to say that Britain's oyster was the wide world itself, that in every market she could sell the cheapest and make the most profit . . . the times had changed. Now she must consolidate and centralize the control of what markets she was entrenched in, to keep them to herself. Now she must take care lest competitors reached new potential markets before she did". Hence the policy of Joseph Chamberlain, as Colonial Secretary and as the apostle of Tariff Reform. Hence the South African War. Hence the attempt to turn the Middle East into a British sphere of influence after the First World War, and to keep it as such after the Second.

That British imperialism was based upon economic ambitions and fears, often of a rather base kind, was imperfectly understood by Lord Milner and the school of idealists which bore his name and stamp. Yet there was much good in the conception of Empire which these men set before themselves and their apathetic compatriots. "Imperialism

in its best days, of its best type, was always equated with service". But Beatrice Webb was right to draw attention to the contrast between theory and practice: for her imperialism was just "an impossible combination . . . of Gladstonian sentimental Christianity with the blackguardism of Rhodes and Jameson".

Yet the Gladstonian tradition was, paradoxically, the most enduring and fruitful element in the power-system which has now largely given way to a free association of sovereign States. Gladstone denounced the British claim to govern other peoples against their will. "The British Empire which we had a right to praise was that which had been created by the labour of our own kinsmen. It had passed through the stage of dependency, and no one would wish to bring that status back. But the existence of British despotisms in the world, however benevolent, raised a moral question". Thus he opposed Disraeli's Eastern policy and split his Party on the issue of Irish Home Rule. But in so doing he showed himself to be not only aware of England's moral duty; he also showed a deeper sense of her long-term interest than was to be found among the imperialists. In the famous "Don Pacifico" debate in 1850 he had argued that the imperialistic approach would lead to isolation. Foreigners were galled by the Englishman's presence, "and I apprehend it is because he has too great a tendency to self-esteem—too little disposition to regard the feelings, the habits and the ideas of others". Unlike the French, the British failed to lay the foundations of a Super-State based upon racial equality. In 1922 Walter Elliot put forward the idea that a racial partnership might be established in the Empire, but without much hope of its being accepted: he confessed to feeling that the imperialists "would rather lose the whole of the Empire . . . than endure the spectacle of a negro sitting in the House of Lords—a negro whose countess, perhaps, was white". The result of this exclusiveness is that the modern Commonwealth has to fight a possibly losing battle against national particularism and racial resentment, whereas the French Community, under de Gaulle's leadership, is emerging as a united Power.

Professor Thornton has written an outstandingly interesting book. His judgment and style are worthy of the subject, and his conclusions are far from negative. Thus he perceives that the British Empire was, often in spite of itself, a force for good. "Emo-

tional imperialism . . . kept regular rendezvous with emotional nationalism . . . It is not surprising that there were many love-affairs as a result: that T. E. Lawrence . . . idealized the Arabs; that Gandhi and Nehru alike deeply respected the English liberal tradition; that a modern Army Mess in Pakistan is today . . . the exact replica down to the slang of that of a good British regiment; and that Asians who have known British imperialism at first hand still set standards for British international conduct that they do not think of applying to the behaviour of other nations, as was clear from their differing reactions to the British invasion of Egypt and the Russian invasion of Hungary in October-November, 1956". Imitation is the sincerest form of flattery, and in this sense many tributes have been, and are still being, paid to British rule.

But the naked assertion of power is no longer appropriate or right. Even in the last century Gladstone saw the danger and warned against it; but the old Adam lives on. Professor Thornton analyses the Suez crisis with brilliance and objectivity. He suggests that the Middle East had a peculiar emotional significance for the imperialist, since it was the one area of the world in which Britain had apparently won single-handed during the Second World War. "The . . . Middle East remained a sphere of old-style British imperial power, and still managed to arouse old-style British imperial emotions". With compressed irony he marshals the indictment.

A Balfour Declaration about Jews might be jettisoned without many tears being shed by the British democracy: but the Suez Canal? Did we not build it? (No.) Did Disraeli not buy it? (No.) Had we not fulfilled our duty to the world in our guardianship of it by keeping it always open to the world's commerce, even in time of war? (No.) Were not the Egyptians grateful for all that we had done for them, particularly during the Second World War? (No.) Was not Nasser as sinister a figure, in his rather cardboard Egyptian way, as Hitler? (No.) And anyway, did not a Tory Government, headed by so patently sincere a figure as Eden, really have a better grasp of British interests in the Middle East than all its captious critics?

He does not give the answer "No" to this last question, but it is all too plainly implied. And the whole book is a well-documented argument for the Gladstonian, rather than the Disraelian, view of how Great Britain should behave in world affairs.

ALTRINCHAM.

## THE REASON WHY

REVOLUTION IN IRAQ. By "Caractacus". Gollancz. 16s.

THIS is in the front rank of contributions to the story of what was happening inside Iraq before the revolution, and, as the dust-cover says, it is the first full-length study of this decisive event in history. The author's deliberate choice of scope, and his angle of view, give the book a special place of its own in the mosaic, for it is an account of the conflict of "opinions prevailing among the people of two nations," the Iraqis and the British.

It is easy for anyone to study opinion among our own people here in England, from the newspapers, magazines and Parliamentary proceedings. It is all there for anyone to read. But in Iraq during the closing years of the Hashemite regime it was not. There was nothing printed or published there which gave any notion of what opinion among the people was. Parliament was hand-picked, political parties were banned, newspapers and outward-going news was heavily censored. There was no way of gauging the pattern of opinion, except by going in among the people of Iraq and finding out for yourself. This is what "Caractacus" did. He is described as "a historian who has lived many years in Iraq and the Middle East and has studied Islamic questions."

The whole book focuses on a vital point which our politicians never seemed able to grasp; that Arab opinion constitutes a force which has existence as a political fact, whether we like it or not, and whether we like Arabs or dislike them. "If we are to have a policy which serves our own interests, we must face the reality, and shape our policy to take account of it." "Caractacus" diagnoses the feeling against the Crown Prince and Nuri, against the British and the Americans; the specially repressive measures of the last three years of the regime; the dependence of the regime on British support and the British military presence, British and American self-deception over the Baghdad Pact, the Eisenhower Doctrine; their misunderstanding of what Arab nationalism is or means. "We shall go on from failure to failure until we learn to take into account the realities of Arab opinion." So, as "Caractacus" saw it, the mounting pressure of opinion, coming up against Nuri's repressive measures and aggravated by British and

## THE REASON WHY

American policies, must clearly be heading for a revolutionary explosion, which came on July 14th, 1958.

I believe his account of the state of opinion is sound. When he goes on into a diagnosis of causes, however, I think he sometimes goes off the mark, and this affects, particularly, his estimate of Nuri. He pictures Nuri as a man interested only in power, in the game of politics for its own sake; not a corrupt man in the worldly sense, but, through his passion for power, a corrupter; a man with no interest in his people nor in the development of their country. This does not fit the facts as I saw them. Nuri's use of power was full of purpose. Arab unity, independence and positive prosperity through development were all real and genuine things, and Nuri always wanted to achieve them. He took an intense interest in the work of the Development Board—he had an active hand in the original formation of a capital works' budget a quarter of a century ago, through which the oil revenues were to be channelled into productive development. I do not doubt that there would have been many progressive measures which he would have liked to follow up, but which did not come about for a peculiar set of reasons which tied his hands.

This is how it came about. The alliance with Great Britain meant, in effect, that governments of Iraq must always follow the British line on major issues of foreign policy. The Israel situation, and then Russia's entry on the side of the Arabs, put Iraqi opinion against a pro-British alignment, and indeed against any pro-Western alliance at all which was aimed at Russia. But Iraqi governments had to be pro-alliance. Therefore, there had to be Parliaments which would accept this line, so they all had to be hand-picked, and the people who had to be picked were not the kind who would back reforms. In other words, there could be a Parliament which would back the pro-British line, or a Parliament which would pass reforms, but not one which would do both. Being what he was, Nuri had to be pro-British, and he hoped against hope that this would earn him the one thing which could loosen the knot by which he was tied—an Anglo-American drive to settle or stabilize the Israel question. If that happened, the tensions would ease, Western opposition to true Arab independence and unity would begin to dissolve,

restraints could be lifted, and then the positive side of Nuri's policies could be promoted.

But the American and British Governments either would not or could not do what was needed to be done over Israel. The Suez operation, with Anglo-French forces attacking Egypt from one angle while Israel was attacking her from another, destroyed what remained of popular support for Nuri. At the same time, it heightened the British Government's anxiety to keep Nuri and his regime in place, while making an Israel settlement even more difficult. The more the British and American Governments backed Nuri, the weaker his position became by the very reason of the backing itself.

After Suez, all Nuri could do was to hang on, repress opposition, and hope that the American and British Governments would see that the Israel situation had to be stabilized. It was this political helping hand he so desperately needed. Instead, Anglo-American policy was to wait spellbound in the lull between each crisis—and then reach for the gun, the one absolutely certain way of weakening Nuri still more.

To "Caractacus" and his Iraqi circle, the practical results were no doubt just the same as if Nuri had been nothing more than a power-seeking tyrant, and I do not query the accuracy of his reporting of Iraqi opinion. But I think the explanation is very much as I have described. If his hands had not been tied, Nuri and his colleagues would certainly have been able to do much more that needed doing internally. Even so, it could not be claimed that he would have done all that the younger Western-trained generation wanted done, for he was getting on in years, and "Caractacus" is right in saying that, in this sense, he was not of the twentieth century.

It is an interesting point that the British Government was also genuinely and sincerely anxious to see development go ahead in Iraq, and to see the necessary reforms made. I do not think they understood the extent to which their restraint on Iraq's foreign policy transmitted itself, by the means I have described, right inside the internal, economic and political structure. The essential point, which "Caractacus" makes well, is that the British Government did not understand what Arabs were thinking, and perhaps the ultimate error was that long-standing belief that "the only thing the

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Arab respects is force." From that belief there follows the corollary that since force earns respect, which is a good thing, more force will earn more respect, which is better. And then, since it is good to earn respect, those who oppose the means of earning it are doing something which is bad. The pity is that so many men in the Middle East had to be broken, or like Nuri lose their lives, in pursuit of this dreary, worthless doctrine.

M. G. IONIDES.

### ABOUT ADEN

ADEN. By Sir Tom Hickinbotham. *Constable*. 21s.

CRICKET IN THE GRASS. By K. de B. Codrington. *Faber & Faber*. 21s.

THE PRIVATE SEA. By Peter Mayne. *Murray*. 18s.

DOCTOR WITH TWO AUNTS. By Tom Girtin. *Hutchinson*. 21s.

THE LOST DUCHESS. By D. A. Pensonby. *Chapman & Hall*. 18s.

THE WORLD OF SOMERSET MAUGHAM. Edited by Klaus W. Jonas. *Peter Owen*. 21s.

THE BIRD LOVER'S BEDSIDE BOOK. Edited by R. M. Lockley. *Eyre & Spottiswoode*. 18s.

MODERN VERSE IN ENGLISH 1900-50. Edited by David Cecil & Allen Tate. *Eyre & Spottiswoode*. 25s.

IT is almost a fashion today to make rather rude noises about various parts of the Commonwealth, and the appearance of Sir Tom Hickinbotham's *Aden* is a welcome reminder of the many thousands of unselfish and able men and women who have worked disinterestedly for the benefit of the numerous races within the old Empire. As Sir Bernard Reilly notes in his Foreword, "Aden has been much in the news during the last year and public interest has been roused in it by the growing importance of the Colony and by the troubles that have beset it, and still more its immediate neighbour, the group of small Arab States which form the Aden Protectorate."

"Recently there has been an increasing awareness that in the changing conditions of the Middle Eastern and Eastern world Aden has sprung into the front rank as a fuelling port and as a commercial and strategic centre on the sea and air routes between Europe, Asia and East Africa."

Sir Tom Hickinbotham worked in Aden for many years in different capacities. As a young Indian Army officer who had joined

the Indian Political Service, he first came to Aden when it was still administered from India. He notices that the first impression made on him by the place, as on so many other people, was an unfavourable one. In fact so strongly did he feel this that he explained to his superior that he did not like the look of Aden, its people, or anything about it and wished to go back to India at once. Later on he became Civil Secretary, a post comparable to the present Chief Secretaryship.

In those days Civil Servants were Jacks-of-all-trades, and Sir Tom had to undertake the divergent duties of Judge, Inspector of Education and Superintendent of Customs, Salt and Excise. Later he returned as Chairman of the Port Trust and his success in this office was so great that he was appointed Governor of Aden in 1951. It is important to realize that this made him Governor of the Protectorate as well as Governor of the Colony. The Colony of Aden is a small, mainly urban territory of about 75 square miles; the Protectorate is a largely mountainous and thinly populated area, much of which cannot be cultivated, and it is about the same size as the United Kingdom. He has to deal therefore with two separate problems.

The Arabs of the Protectorate tribes are usually popular with British officers, whose work has brought them into contact with them and who can understand their outlook on life. *Aden* gives an excellent account of the Protectorate and its inhabitants. It also includes many interesting experiences that the author had during his various tours of duty. Sir Tom would not claim that his book has literary pretensions, but it is consistently interesting and informative about a territory which has rudely been called "the back-door to hell" and which has proved over and over again to have a genuine fascination for foreigners who really get to know it.

Accounts of childhood early in the present century are common and many of them are excellent; among this last group *Crickets in the Grass* by Professor Codrington takes a high place. It is an account of his childhood and boyhood in India, but later spent mostly with an aunt in Sidmouth, at a prep. school and at Sherborne. It is all neatly observed and unemphatically set down. There are some charming pages about the author's visit to Exeter Cathedral in order to take some brass rubbings for his local vicar. The boy and his friend Margaret were enter-

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**MACMILLAN**



tained to a sumptuous tea by the Dean. From the days of skiffle and television, it is pleasant to look back to a time when home-made enjoyments were simpler and keener than they are now.

The travel books of Mr. Peter Mayne are remarkable for their intensely personal style and for side-lights on such unfamiliar places as the North-West Frontier and Sind. His latest, *The Private Sea*, is concerned with a visit to the Greek Island of Poros. This place is three hours' sailing south of Athens and it faces the mainland of the Peloponnesus across an almost land-locked "private sea". The people of the island, especially the young men, are drawn with great humour and kindness. Poros is overwhelmed by a tide of weekendening Athenian trippers who enfold their little coastal motor boats and leave the beaches soiled by dirty paper bags. Mr. Mayne calls his book a "documentary with additions". I imagine that the principal embellishment is a beautiful young American called Julie. *The Private Sea* is very well written and always entertaining. It is a pity that there are no illustrations of a place which clearly cries out for them.

Among the colourful characters of the

eighteenth century there has always been a small niche for John Wolcot, the *Doctor with Two Aunts*, who was in his time a successful West Country doctor, a temporary Jamaican clergyman, composer and musician, an artist and art-lover, and under the name of Peter Pindar, a professional satirist, who stirred up more controversies than almost any of his contemporaries did. He went for George III and he went for Pitt. He did not spare the Royal Academicians. He received the praise of people as eminent as Burns, Beckford, Hazlitt and Wordsworth.

Mr. Girtin has told his story with great spirit and the frontispiece is appropriately enough a reproduction of the painting by John Opie, who was discovered and brought to London by Wolcot himself. Writing in 1831 to Edward Fitzgerald, Thackeray declared, "When I come to London to make my fortune . . . I shall read Young and Peter Pindar". Leigh Hunt called him "The Fountain of Lampons". Naturally the Victorian moralists had little use for him. It was George Saintsbury who said that if Wolcot had been a little more of a scholar and a great deal more of a gentleman he would have been a very great man indeed, as it is his, very cleverness is something prodigious.

The reason so little is known of Queen Victoria's mother-in-law, *The Lost Duchess*, Louise of Saxe-Coburg, is that her marriage to Ernest, eldest son of Duke Francis of Saxe-Coburg, broke up when Albert was only three. Louise never saw him again, and later she married the Count of Polzig and lived happily with him for a short period before she died. Miss D. A. Ponsonby's short biography succeeds in doing exactly what the author set out to achieve. It gives an intimidating picture with plenty of humour of life spent in the rigid etiquette of a little German court where the dukes and margraves spent their lives in a tireless round of entertainment. Louise was unhappy with her husband, who was nearly twenty years older than her. She had charm and high spirits, and according to Count Mensdorff, the Prince Consort inherited from his mother a natural talent for imitation and a great sense of the ludicrous. It is interesting to note that some of Louise's heavily italicized letters read as though they had been written by her famous daughter-in-law.

To celebrate Mr. Maugham's eighty-fifth birthday, which took place on the twenty-fifth of last month, Dr. Klaus W. Jonas has compiled an anthology, *The World of Somerset*

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*Maugham*. It is intended as a companion piece to *The Maugham Enigma* which came out on his eightieth birthday. The best things in this book are Mr. Swinnerton on "Maugham as a Writer" and Mr. St. John Ervine on "Maugham the Playwright" and the most piquant thing in the book is a letter from Mr. Maugham to Dr. Jonas.

Mr. Maugham begins by saying that he has a great dislike of reading anything that is concerned with himself or his works, and he ends by noting his present activity, that of critic; "but I like writing. For well over half a century I have been in the habit of shutting myself up in a room every morning and writing till lunch time. Do you know the story of the elderly Frenchman who had been accustomed for twenty years to spend every evening with his mistress? One day a friend asked him: 'But after all these years why on earth don't you marry her?' His face fell. 'Where then should I spend my evenings?' he answered. I am like the elderly Frenchman; if I didn't write, how should I pass my mornings? I am well aware that I have lost any talent I may have had." In spite of blemishes and misspellings admirers will find plenty to enjoy in this little book.

Two anthologies, both excellent in their way, must end the books under notice this month. Mr. Lockley is well known as a lover of islands and wild birds. He has turned his wide knowledge to most profitable use in *The Bird Lover's Bedside Book*, in which he has collected his favourite passages from the writings of bird watchers and countrymen, linked by a kind of commentary from his pen. I was particularly glad to find a translation of some delightful lines by the fourteenth century bard David ap Gwylm on the book's first page. There are plenty of familiar poems and prose extracts, but there are many more equally good and much less familiar.

*Modern Verse in English 1900-50*, edited by Lord David Cecil and the American professor, Allen Tate, is a most ambitious undertaking. In 688 pages the compilers have given their idea of what is best in British and American poetry. Their task was almost desperately difficult, it would be impossible to avoid exasperating some readers by sins of commission and others by omission. Lord David's choices will not always appeal to readers with a strong sense of perspective, but he has done what he can and one feels at times that he does too much for the young poets. It is much less easy for an Englishman fairly familiar

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with the American field to assess the value of Professor Tate's choice. He considers Mr. Robert Frost to be an end and not a beginning. Professor Tate believes that the value of American or any other poetry can be left "to the puritans who cannot look at the world as it is; the future is at any rate no proper subject for criticism". The book's value lies in the presentation of a large corpus of verses gathered from both sides of the Atlantic. The reader is at liberty to draw his own deductions.

ERIC GILLET.



- THE UNSPEAKABLE SKIPTON. Pamela Hansford Johnson. *Macmillan*, 15s.  
 THE MIDDLE AGE OF MRS. ELIOT. Angus Wilson. *Secker & Warburg*, 18s.  
 FIRE NEXT DOOR. Guy Deghy. *Wingate*, 15s.  
 ESMOND IN INDIA. R. Prawer Jhabvala. *Allen & Unwin*, 15s.  
 TO THE ISLANDS. Randolph Stow. *Macdonald*, 13s. 6d.  
 EXECUTION. Colin McDougall. *Macmillan*, 15s.  
 THE NORTHERN LIGHT. A. J. Cronin. *Gollancz*, 15s.  
 THE GLITTERING HORN. Pierson Dixon. *Cape*, 15s.  
 ORDEAL BY INNOCENCE. Agatha Christie. *Crime Club*, 12s. 6d.

**T**HE UNSPEAKABLE SKIPTON of Miss Pamela Hansford Johnson's fascinating new book is a vintage specimen of that thorn in the flesh of publishers, and perhaps also of impresarios of the other arts, the genius *manqué*, the man who once hit, or almost hit, the ball of success in resounding style, but who ever afterwards misses it. It is of the essence of this type that it should wreak its wrath on those who are genuinely trying to help. The avowed archetype of Skipton is Frederick Rolfe, the self-styled Baron Corvo, from whose unhappy odyssey Miss Hansford Johnson has taken some of the elements of her story.

Skipton has the Corvine aspect, the histrionic religiosity, the absorption in the composition of insult, the power to justify, almost to dignify, the most sordid sponging. For the Venetian sub-world through which Rolfe wandered, Miss Hansford Johnson has substituted Bruges, a felicitous transference if ever there was one. The picture of Skipton in his garret in one of the old houses by the canal, writing a letter of abuse to his publisher, is a perfect opening. The sense of place, the decaying beauty which Skiptons find congenial, is superbly conveyed; it provides too a groundswell of elegiac music merging with the bells of Bruges to accompany the comic scenes of the plot, which hang on whether Skipton will or will not succeed in various exploitations.

The writer (I presume it was the author) of the jacket blurb raises the question why, in spite of their unspeakable behaviour, public sympathy is always with the Skiptons and not with their victims. I could suggest several reasons: one that immediately arises out of this book is that Skipton may be a fraud but at least he is a fraud with style; his victims, the terrible woman verse-playwright, her husband and hangers on, are just phonies. None of the opposition in this book, except perhaps the Italian singer, seems worthy of his skill. But perhaps I am wrong: part of Skipton's tragedy is that he is inexorably driven lower and lower, to more sordid shifts and grubbier catches. Much of the material is richly comic, but the sad accompanying music has its triumphs too, the spectacle of the wretched man standing desolate outside the brothel, from whose dead owner he had hoped to wring his miserable commission, has a dreadful pathos. In these flashes the writer provides the answer to her own question. In our organized and regulated world, Skipton can seem like a free man. Or, at least, a man who has made his servitude rather than accepted it. He is the dark angel, architect of his own damnation, but an angel still.

I have come to feel that those who loudly hailed Mr. Angus Wilson as a moralist have done him a disservice, by driving him to themes which constrict his chief talent, which is for observing and reflecting the facets of society, particularly that beyond or hovering on the borders of respectability.

*The Middle Age Of Mrs. Eliot* has a theme which demands primarily something which in my view Mr. Wilson doesn't have, a deep feeling for his characters as opposed to a fascinated delight in their oddities.

## NOVELS

Meg Eliot is the wife of a brilliantly successful barrister: after twelve years of marriage they still have a vital relationship. She is gay, charming and very good at managing people: she is generous too and does not leave out her older and less successful friends from her parties in the elegant house in Lord North Street. This world, and all the other visual worlds through which Meg Eliot's tragedy forces her, are described with a wealth of detail and a power of presentation which is dazzling, but the predicament of the central character, widowed and impoverished at a blow, does not move one as it should. Still, the book is being read by "everybody", as, for its other merits, it deserves to be.

As I read Guy Deghy's *Fire Next Door* with its exploration into the more riotous aspects of London life in the late 'thirties, I could not help sighing for the hand of Mr. Wilson, who with this sort of material could never put a word wrong. *Fire Next Door* starts promisingly with a young man, Stephen Carter, part Hungarian, part English, whose English father has rejected the ramifications of his family in the British Establishment. Secured in his idea of the absurdities and pruderies of English social life, Lindsay Carter is unwilling even to send his son to England on business, and Stephen comes to London from Budapest rather like a visiting anthropologist. But, as he explores further the habits of the natives, the interest begins to flag and a very promising beginning peters out in a mixture of novelettish sophistication and rather hollow noble sentiment. I didn't find the high life and the orgies at all convincing; the low life, with Stephen's disreputable cicerone, Adrian Bentholme, is livelier and better, but here again I yearned for Mr. Wilson's more precise and skilful hand.

What a delightful series of comedies of Indian life is now being written by Indian authors in English. Is it very provincial to hope that these will never be elbowed out by writing exclusively in the vernacular? *Esmond In India* is the latest novel by Mrs. Jhabvala, who has not without justification been called an Indian Jane Austen. I have to admit that almost the only unpleasant character in the book is Esmond himself, a cultural expert of revolting smugness who because he is passably handsome rather than because he is an expert, leads a happy social life lecturing to the sillier kind of emancipated Indian ladies, gorgeous butterflies

whom Mrs. Jhabvala pins down with exquisite precision. The warmth of her book, as of all these books, comes from her affectionate descriptions of Indian family life. The warmth once ensnared Esmond, in the person of the lazy, sensual, unemancipated Gulab, who now repels him by her sluttishness and stupidity. The conflict is not unduly stressed, but it is shaped so that one hopes that the charming silly young Shakuntala, just out of college and wide-eyed for all that Delhi has to offer, will not throw herself away on Esmond. Rich relations, poor relations, matrimonial intrigues and gossip give an almost Victorian cosiness to this most enjoyable novel, but the seeing eye of the writer is not cosy at all, any more than Jane Austen's was.

*To The Islands* is a novel of the Australian outback. It has an interesting theme, the last journey of an angry old missionary, who discovers, when he is forced to retire from the post which he had dominated by his energy and determination, that he has lost his faith in what he taught. He was a pioneer worker among the Australian aborigines, whom he had ruled by his own domineering form of love and by the stock-whip, and he had lived on into



*In Trust and Treason* is a true Resistance story with a difference. Suzanne Warren joined the movement, fell in love with a British Officer and married in Occupied Paris—and then members of the movement were arrested by the Germans. Who betrayed them? Told by Gordon Young.

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EDWARD HULTON

a generation which had no further use for him or his methods. The crisis of the book is precipitated by his attack on a young Australian black man, who had mistreated a girl whom Heriot had regarded as his daughter. There are others on the Mission station who would help the old man to acceptance and serenity, but he will have none of them. He goes out alone into the bush attended by one faithful blackfellow, and entwined with the action is his running commentary on his past and his progress towards participation in the very myths against which his life's teaching has been directed, but which have become part of the warp and woof of his mind. This book is a very impressive achievement. It is admirably written; without romanticism it conveys the attitude of an archaic people towards life and death, and it paints in spare yet evocative prose the character of the strange landscape. It is good to see Australian writers turning to examine their inheritance and forsaking imitations of European sophistication: in the newer and truer Australian literature *To The Islands* deserves an honourable place.

It is heartening, too, to hear a distinctive Canadian voice talking about the last world war. *Execution* deals with a theme which has stung many writers into mordant comment, the corruption of ordinary decent human nature into acquiescence in brutality through the routine experiences of war. The setting is the Italian campaign, the key episode is the ugly killing of a couple of harmless Italian deserters ordered by a military martinet, and the effect of the episode on those who were forced to take part. The theme is very dramatically developed, the writing is realistic without obscenity, and something in the attitude of ranker to officer, subaltern to general, man to man, seems distinctively Canadian and neither American nor British. This is one of the better war novels and it should be read.

*The Northern Light* is not one of the better Cronins: his energy and punch seem dissipated in a morass of not very inspiring detail, for once his characters are unable to make their way on their own terms. It would not be fair to suggest that the sheer story-telling ability does not impel you to read on and find out whether the high principled Henry Page, having refused to sell his sober and respectable newspaper, *The Northern Light*, to an unscrupulous

syndicate who would kill it, is going to win his fight for survival or not. The central situation is realistic and pertinent; the surrounding circumstances are sentimentalized and the denouement is melodramatically contrived. It is one of those books ventilating an important issue in an unimportant way, more characteristic of the *Daily Flip* than the *Northern Light*, but the highly seasoned hodge-podge is flung together by a very skilled professional hand.

*The Glittering Horn* is a novel about the Byzantium of Justinian and Theodora. I have always wished that Mr. Lawrence Durrell would turn his attention to Theodora (surely the grand historical original of Justine) and it cannot be said that Mr. Pierson Dixon has the armoury to deal with this extraordinary woman. He does make a valiant attempt to reproduce her early life as a circus prostitute, her meeting with Justinian and her gradual assumption of power, although the portrait is on pretty conventional lines and the writing lacking in force and tension. The danger of weaving a romantic plot about imaginary characters to highlight actual historical persons and events is that, however scrupulous the historical accuracy, it tends to become suspect, while both real and fictitious characters have each less than their meed of life. This, I feel, is what has happened to Mr. Pierson Dixon's Theodora, but the period is so interesting and so little explored that I read *The Glittering Horn* with considerable interest.

Malevolent readers who try to find in the pages of *Ordeal By Innocence* some evidence that the powers of the Empress of Detection are impaired will once again be unlucky. It may be true that nothing in the book is so original as its opening. What happens when a satisfactory candidate for the murderer, among a close ring of suspects, is proved after conviction to be innocent? Everyone in the Argyle family, as well as in the police force, cursed the witness who came forward to prove that Jacko Argyle could not have murdered his adopted mother. He was a bad hat and nobody mourned him. If he did not do it, somebody else did and with her usual impartiality in turning the spotlight upon everybody, Miss Christie invites us to say who. I did and got it wrong and I exhort every reader of detective stories to take a hand.

RUBY MILLAR.



## records

### Orchestral

IT is axiomatic in broadcasting that cutting, however painful to the speaker concerned, leads to an improved script: and how often do we not read that ten minutes out of a play or a few thousand words out of a book would have been all to the good. And so it is with certain contemporary composers, notably Shostakovich in some of his symphonies. The 11th has now been recorded, by the French National Radio Orchestra conducted by André Cluytens, in the presence of the composer, so that this interpretation may be considered authoritative. It is a programme work inspired by the unsuccessful revolution of 1905, and each of the four movements has a descriptive title: Palace Square—Ninth of January—Eternal Memory—Alarm. The second movement, which combines a scherzo with a slow intermezzo, is the finest in the work and one would not wish it a bar less: but the Funeral March sounds, at least to me, overlong and the composer has not solved the problem of a really satisfactory finale. Nevertheless, this is a truly impressive symphony (Columbia 33CXS 1604-5: one single and one double sided 12 in.). There are no *longueurs* in the composer's closely knit and delightful *Violin Concerto* which David Oistrakh has now recorded for the second time, with a different orchestra and conductor—Leningrad State Philharmonic Orchestra: Eugene Mravinsk—on a ten-inch disc (Parlophone PMB 1014). He plays it as superbly as before.

An interesting coupling gives us Prokofiev's first and second Violin Concertos (D major, op. 19 and G minor, op. 63) played very acceptably by Ruggiero Ricci and well accompanied by Ansermet and the Suisse Romande Orchestra. Twenty years or so separate the two works but their characteristics are the same: sardonic humour, some sharply dissonant harmony and some attractive lyricism (Decca LXT 5446). The same conductor and orchestra play, rather surprisingly, a *pot pourri* from *Carmen* which includes only four purely orchestral numbers and gives the *Habañera* to the violins. The result is very delightful and as the disc also includes all but two numbers (*Pastorale*

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and *Intermezzo*) from the *L'Arlésienne* Suites, equally well played, this is a most attractive issue (Decca LXT 5461). Another very desirable disc gives us four "symphonic poems" by Liadov, the exquisite *Enchanted Lake*, the *Musical Snuff-Box*, *Kikimora* and *Baba-Yaga*, the last two of which came nearer to the expression of absolute evil in music than anything else I know. Also included are a pleasant *Overture on Hebrew Themes* by Prokofiev and Rimsky-Korsakov's orchestral show-piece, *Caprice Espagnole*. All these pieces are exceedingly well played by the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra, conducted by Efrem Kurtz (H.M.V. ALP 1632). Kempe and the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra have made a lovely record of Wagnerian excerpts, *Prelude and Liebestod* from *Tristan*, *Preludes to Acts 1 and 3* from *Lohengrin*, *Prelude to Act 1* and *Good Friday music* from *Parsifal*: playing and recording are superlative (H.M.V. ALP 1638).

*Chamber Music*

Two of Beethoven's greatest cello and piano sonatas, A major, op. 69 and C major op. 102, No. 1, are marvellously played by Casals, with a perfect companion in Serkin, on Philips ABL 3223, and are free of the accompanying groans and grunts that disfigured a previous issue of Nos. 1 and 5 of these works (Philips ABL 3131). Anything played by Richter is of the highest interest to me but I recommend the recording he has made, with Russian colleagues, of the Franck Piano Quartet with some reserve. It is a fiery interpretation in the outer movements, with a very slow (but not in the least sentimental) middle movement and there are some defects of balance. Admirers of the pianist should not fail to hear it (Parlophone PMA 1042).

*Instrumental*

It is good to find Rosalyn Tureck, after her rather disappointing record of the Bach *Goldberg Variations*, back at the top of her form in the first two *Partitas*, B flat and C minor. All repeats are made, with subtle variations of nuance, and the clarity of the part playing is as wonderful as ever (H.M.V. ALP 1645).

Also recommended. An excellent selection of pieces by Buxtehude played in good style by Hans Heintze on the lovely Schitger organ at Steinkirchen, with Lisa Schwarzweller singing the soprano part in

the beautiful *Funeral Music on the Death of my Father* (D.G.G. Archive APM 14076). Clara Haskill in a charming performance of Schumann's *Kinderszenen* (Philips ABE 10080).

### Song

Flagstad and Kim Borg have recorded a number of songs by Sibelius on Decca LXT 5444 and D.G.G. DGM 19113 respectively, most of them little known and nearly all of great interest and beauty. Flagstad is accompanied throughout by the London Symphony Orchestra, conducted by Oivin Fjeldstad (but not all the orchestrations are by Sibelius) and is in magnificent voice. The freshness and youthfulness of her tone is amazing and she brings more conviction to these songs, and variety of nuance, than even to those by Grieg she has recorded. Kim Borg has Erik Werba, a first-class accompanist, at the piano and duplicates five of the fourteen songs sung by Flagstad. Decca provide the Swedish texts with English translations and notes on each song: D.G.G. give no help in this matter at all so that those who want some information must turn to the *Sibelius Symposium* edited by Gerald Abraham in which there is an excellent chapter on the songs by Astra Desmond.

Both these discs are highly desirable, but if I had to choose between them I would opt for the Flagstad. It should be said that Mr. Borg sings everything in the original languages, English, French, Finnish, German, and Swedish. H.M.V. have issued a special edition of *The Songs of Moussorgsky* (sixty-three in all) magnificently sung by Boris Christoff and, with a few exceptions where the orchestra is used, accompanied by Alexandre Labinsky, who is first rate. The five discs, one single-sided, are "boxed" and there is a handsomely illustrated descriptive brochure giving texts, in four languages, of the songs, essays on the composer, and notes on each song by Christoff. The records cannot be purchased separately—but I hope they will be made available in this way later on. The only failure is *The Nursery cycle* and that simply because a man, and especially a bass, cannot sound like a small boy. The tone of voice Christoff adopts makes him sound like an old man. The remaining songs, as I have said, are magnificently sung and give a wonderful picture of Russian life at all levels.

ALEC ROBERTSON.



## finance

UNCERTAINTY is like the plague to investors. Given statistical data and clear economic trends they can make their calculations and take up a position accordingly. Imponderables there always are, but often they can be allowed for in a general line of policy or in assessing any particular issue. Of all the uncertainties that arise perhaps the political variety are the worst, since it is usually of vital moment to assess them correctly and they are usually not susceptible of any form of accurate measurement. What, for example, will be the outcome of the next General Election? No one can say, and at the moment no one knows when it will come—except, perhaps, the Prime Minister, and it is unlikely that he has yet come to any conclusion. The issues on which the battle will be fought are equally obscure.

The modern pseudo-scientific game of public opinion polls has, in these circumstances of uncertainty, a great vogue with the man in the street and an influence on Stock Markets disproportionate to their true value as guides to the economic and political future of the nation. It is, of course, understandable that if a so-called poll indicates a trend quite the opposite from that which has been accepted by investors as the one on which they can base their calculations there should be a market reaction based on fear. This was, in fact, what happened about the middle of January. For many weeks it had been accepted that the Government enjoyed the confidence and support of the majority—the great majority—of the electors: a "confidence boom" was in full swing; new issues, particularly of the much advertised new Unit Trusts, were attracting millions of pounds from applicants and investors hardly gave a thought to elections. Then came some badinage about the probable date—"This year, next year, sometime . . .!"—and thoughts of a General Election led to widespread debate on the probable outcome. A popular newspaper seized the opportunity and produced the result of a "popular poll" as fifty-fifty: the Socialists have an even chance of winning, apparently. There was an immediate rush to sell any shares which would particularly be affected if Socialist

## NATIONAL AND ENGLISH REVIEW

theories prevailed. Most sections of the market showed some widespread, if not severe, marking down.

On Monday, January 19th, active trading produced a record number of bargains (19,831). Sellers obviously predominated, but I found it suprising that the Index lost only 1.9 points at 221.2. A lot of stock went into "investment" hands. This usually means the managers of institutional funds. Normally, when the yield on gilts and the yield on industrial equities show only a narrow gap, the institutions do not release large funds for buying equities. It seemed possible, however, that the Unit Trusts might have been giving buying orders.

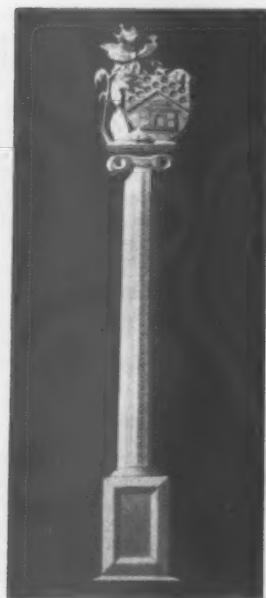
Last month I referred to the large amounts of money the new Unit Trusts had attracted. Some had published the list of companies in whose equity stock they proposed to invest the unit-holders money. Their funds must be utilised to earn dividends, so they must enter the market at some point. One would have supposed the managers would not select a moment of "jitter" selling to acquire stock unless they believed the moment would be brief and the causes of it were ill-founded. Custodians of these millions were caught in the dilemma of politics. "If we buy now and the Socialists win the General Election, our

investments may be subjected to the slings and arrows of outrageous theory put into practice: but if we don't buy now, and the Government wins the election, we shall never be able to use our millions on such terms as we can get now, as everyone else will be pushing the price levels higher and we won't get the stock we want." Such an argument might have brought some investment managers into the market as buyers when prices weakened on the "pop poll" news, in the belief that they could not afford to risk being uninvested in the equity market with at least a part of their funds.

The British Aluminium battle ended with the defeat of Lord Portal and his colleagues. Reynolds Metals and Tube Investments bought their way through the market to victory. This has been another source of fresh investment funds and large sums may have been waiting for a break in the price level to go back into the industrial equity market.

All this indicates that uncertainties will prevail for some time and markets will probably fluctuate with a generally downward tendency—in spite of what someone called "cloth cap" investment—until the General Election is with us. Short-dated Government stock will provide a "hedge" for part of the small investor's funds.

LOMBARD.



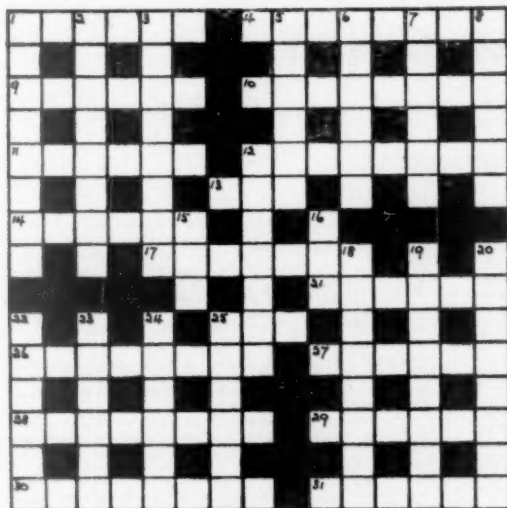
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A Prize of one guinea will be awarded for the first correct solution opened on February 16. Please cut out and send, with your name and address, to National and English Review (Crossword), 2 Brems Buildings, London, E.C.4.

Last month's winner is:

Miss A. I. Shipman,  
Hoburne, Roescott Hill,  
Christchurch, Hants.

## SOLUTION TO CROSSWORD PUZZLE NUMBER 29

Across.—3. Chair, 8. Starch, 9. Ostend  
10. Islam, 11. Derail, 12. Appear, 13. Inn,  
14. Bleating, 17. Curbed, 20. Light literature,  
23. Arrant, 26. Incensed, 30. Hat, 31. Pirate,  
32. Awaits, 33. Reign, 34. Finale, 35. Idling,  
36. Dogma.

Down.—1. At heel, 2. Armada, 3. Chili,  
4. All night sitting, 5. Romancer, 6. Stuper,  
7. Inmate, 14. Bella, 15. Eager, 16. Tot, 18  
Blues, 19. Dread, 21. Lathered, 22. Ate  
24. Raisin, 25. Ararat, 27. Crania, 28. Nearly,  
29. Patent.

## CLUES

### ACROSS

1. Keats' synonym for truth (6)
3. Expose a medical man assuming different voices (8)
9. A sheep is one of 2 trio (6)
10. The Oxford student with a scholarship is more vulgar (8)
11. Corporal punishment for fishermen? (6)
12. A hold-up at sea (4-4)
13. Dry in half a second (3)
14. Mean in mind (6)
17. A little man and a slippery one, but well-mannered (7)
21. A container provided by Nature (3-3)
25. Kind of humour which appeals to teetotalers? (3)
26. Mixed races in a group of islands (8)
27. The band nip back inside for an instrument (6)
28. "If I drink . . . of a day, so shorten I the stature of my soul", Meredith (*Modern Love*) (8)
29. Middle name is changed (6)
30. Uninterested, with no leaning either way (8)
31. Form of decoration suitable for a refrigerator? (6)

### DOWN

1. Wild animal's family — one should be on guard (8)
2. Her suitor tempted her with apples (8)
3. Attenuated monarch, but rational (8)
5. Numbers on press are satirical (6)
6. Company representative the Spanish drive (6)
7. Face two directions in turn (6)
8. I tarry indefinitely — and that's an unusual thing (6)
12. Learning by correspondence? (7)
15. River forming part of a wide estuary (3)
16. Permit obstruction (3)
18. A period of perpetual spring? (4-4)
19. Where people had to pay to go round with fish (8)
20. Faltering ancients for example (8)
22. The destination of one "creeping like a snail" (6)
23. Inclinations of early invaders (6)
24. Motor with a learner's sign? — Nonsense! (6)
25. Fiends of French Belgian town (6)

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**BATTLE.** Sussex.—Ye Olde Chequers Hotel, 14th century inn, situated delightful country. 6 miles coast. Rest and relaxation. Licensed.

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**BEXHILL.**—Barbados Hotel, Club licence. A mod. hotel on unrivalled sea front site fca. south. Good food, superior amenities. Children welcome. Grad. Fl. accom. Brochure. Tel. 1871.

**BEXHILL.**—Centre sea front, Wilton Court Hotel, Lift, radio in bdrms., T.V., dancing. Comfort and good food. Licensed. Low winter terms. Brochure. Tel. 1315.

**BIRCHINGTON.**—Berseford Hotel. A.A./R.A.C.\*\*\*. Open all year. Secluded cliff top, priv. lawns and sandy beach. Sat. Din./Dances. Squash, Tennis. Thanet 41345.

**BROADSTAIRS.**—The Hotel on the Jetty—a small cmfble. hotel overlooking sea & Viking Bay. Noted for excent cuisine. Restaurant open to non-residents. 'Phone Thanet 61905.

**BROADSTAIRS.**—Esplanade Hotel. Fully licensed. Finest sea-front position. 24 b'drooms, T.V. and Sun Lounges. Games Room. Car Par. Res. Proprietors. Thanet 62596.

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**CANTERBURY'S** new fully licensed Hotel, the *Chaucer*, Ivy Lane, close to the cathedral and city centre. 'Phone: 4427/8. A TRUST HOUSE HOTEL.

**CANTERBURY.**—Dunkirk Hotel AA/RAC. 25 bedrooms, 4 miles north of city on A.2 (London-Dover). Ideal stop-over for travellers to Continent. Comfort, good food & service assured. Tel.: Boughton 283.

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**CLIFTONVILLE.**—Greylands Hotel, Edgar Rd., offers all requirements for an enjoyable seaside holiday at reasonable terms. Illus. brochure sent on Tel. Thanet 21082.

**CLIFTONVILLE.** Kent.—Endcliffe Hotel, facing sea. Every comfort. Lift. Night porter. T.V. Room radios. Terms from 9 gns. in winter. B.B.B. from 22/6. Thanet 21829.

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**DEAL.**—Bristol Hotel. A.A., R.A.C. approved. Comfort and service exceptional, central heating, 100 yards from sea. Ideal touring centre for Kent. Sea fishing and golf; cocktail bar; garage for 50 cars. Tel.: Deal 1038.

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**DOVER.**—Shalimar Private Hotel. Sea front. Telephone Dover 740. (Lift). Hot and Cold Water. Terms on application.

**DUBLIN.**—Royal Hibernian. 'Phone 72991 (10 lines). Tel.: Hibernia.

**EASTBOURNE.**—Hydro Hotel, South Cliff, facing sea. 1st Class accommodation at moderate inclusive terms. 'Phone 643.

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